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MY GREAT LOOM.

A REAL ROBINSON CRUSOE

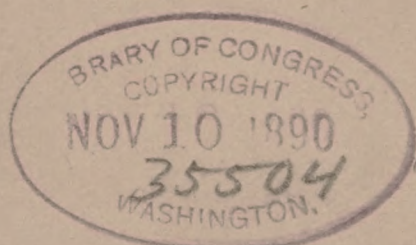
BEING THE STORY OF
THE STRANGE YET TRUE EXPERIENCES
OF A COMPANY OF
CASTAWAYS ON A PACIFIC ISLAND

EDITED FROM THE SURVIVOR'S OWN NARRATIVE

✓
BY

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J. A. WILKINSON

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BOSTON

D LOTHROP COMPANY

WASHINGTON STREET OPPOSITE BROMFIELD

1890

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PREFACE.

'S story is true. Its incidents have been here faithfully recorded, as detailed to me by the chief actor in the story, whom I met by chance and to whom I did some little kindnesses when he was much in need of them. This no doubt led him to trust me with the details of his eventful life; not, however, until I had given him my solemn promise that I would not assist in identifying him in any or under any circumstances, would he permit me to tell his tale. Strange as the castaway's story may seem, it is therefore to be considered as true in every particular except in the names used and in such matters as might lead to his identification. It is no romancer's fancy of possibilities worked to a logical conclusion, but is the record of a condition where natural ability and educated incapacity are brought into sharpest contrast.

This narrative was taken down word for word from the lips of the chief actor who, now an old man, has brooded over the long-withheld secret of his life and has finally told it all. An indefinite fear of consequences, should he give it publicity has, until now, sealed his lips, but no reader of his strange story but will acquit him of responsibility or blame in the final tragedy. The only wonder will be that he restrained himself so long. His fear of identification, however, amounts almost to a mania, and an assurance that the island would not be within the jurisdiction of any country and that his punishment would be impossible, affords him but little comfort.

Verily, truth is stranger than fiction. A narrative of adventure, danger, ingenuity and untiring work such as is this, outranks in interest the thousand and one essays in the field of desert-island fiction.

J. A. WILKINSON.

TORONTO, June 20, 1889.

A REAL ROBINSON CRUSOE.

CHAPTER I.

My parents—Their difference in disposition—My home—Lord Kilraine—My early years—I go to school—Homesickness—Inattention to study—Vacation-time—College-life—Lord Kilraine's family—My bad record at college—I am "plucked"—My father's anger—I leave home—Ship for Australia under an assumed name.

I WAS born in one of the southern shires of England. My father was a merchant, doing a very extensive business and reputed to be very wealthy. He had received his education at one of the higher colleges, where only the sons of gentlemen have an *entree*. He had traveled a great deal on the continent and was looked upon as "finished." Being the prospective heir to considerable wealth, he was considered a good "catch" by all the *mammas* who had marriageable daughters on their hands. It was because of this, I presume, that he was given a place in the social circles that surrounded many a nobleman's fireside, and when he married the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Squire Newberry of the

Grange it was said, "He might have done better." But he could not have done better this side of heaven.

My father was a stern, upright, farseeing man. His word was as good as his bond, and he never forgave a deceptive trick. His escutcheon never bore a stain, and he was as jealous of the integrity of his family as he was of his own. He made few demonstrations of affection; yet I think in his heart he was exceedingly kind. He seldom uttered a harsh word; but still his presence always seemed to cast a shadow on our youthful mirth. He was industrious, and as attentive to business as he could have been had he been at his wits' end to make ends meet. A thorough business man, he seldom made a mistake, and consequently his business and wealth were ever on the increase. He admired learning and contributed more to the extension of education than to religion; yet was not, by any means, an irreligious man. It was his ambition that all his children should shine in the world of letters, and nothing would have given him more delight than to have had one, or more, of his children turn out eminent authors. He deplored the fact, that, being immersed in business, he could not devote more of his time to literary pursuits.

My mother was, in many respects, the very antithesis of this. As gentle as a dove, as affectionate as an angel, she would have brought up all her children in her home, and retained them forever in her nursery. A tear was as natural to her eye in trouble as a dew drop to the grass; a smile of joy that almost spoke, answered every word of kindness that was bestowed

upon her. How happy she always seemed, with all her children around her, enjoying themselves in the sports of childhood. How sad she was when any of them left their home, even for a few days, and how anxiously she looked for every mail, that should bring word of her loved, but absent ones. How tenderly she guided the young steps, and how lovingly she chastised the wayward. There never was harshness in her tone; there never was anger in her heart. Such was the mother that reared me.

My father's residence lay just outside of the town in which his place of business was located. A beautiful old place, surrounded by trees of centuries' growth, with carefully kept lawns and fruitful gardens. Close adjoining our grounds on one side were the grounds of Lord Kilraine, and on the other those of an extensive manufacturer of the same town. Whatever comforts wealth could bring, we enjoyed, without ostentation; for my father was a practical man, and did not care for anything that was merely for show, and my mother was so domestic in her manner that she had no time to spare from her children for the pomp of the world.

Lord Kilraine was a man very like my father in his tastes and habits, and they were fast friends. Many of their spare hours were spent together either in the library of the one or the other, and most of the children's parties in which we were participants, were held either at Lord Kilraine's residence or at our own.

My early life was without event, worthy of note.

I was looked after by a kind old nurse until I was large enough to go to the school-room, to receive my first lessons from the governess. My mother took care that the religious instructions were given at her own knee, and these were imparted with great tenderness and love. She taught what she felt and what she lived with too much earnest gentleness to be resisted, and so we were taught the truest principles in the most effective form.

I was naturally indolent and thoughtless. I could learn as quickly as the best of them, when I set to work to do so; but no matter how I determined to learn a lesson, I would soon be lost in some kind of useless thought—studying a picture in a book, or on the wall, or looking out at the sky and imagining pictures in the clouds. Presently the governess would speak to me and startle me from my reverie, when I would again turn to my lesson and as soon forget.

I was very fond of play, and when the hour for dismissal came I was glad to get away, and with a bound and a skip I would fly to the play-ground or the field.

Thus the years sped on and I grew apace until at last the time came for me to go away to school. My mother gave me such earnest injunctions, and with tears in her eyes so pleaded with me to be a good boy and be diligent in my studies, that I determined to get to and keep at the head of my class.

When my father bade me good-by, he simply said, “Well, my boy, I hope you will attend to all your mother has told you, and that you will pay better attention to your books, and prove a credit to us.”

Partly glad to go from the restraint of home and see new scenes, but really sorry to leave my mother, I was driven away, and was soon installed in a private school, where a few youths of about my own age were in like circumstances. For a few days things went on very well and then I began to get homesick. I thought I must start on foot and go home, and I certainly would have done this, had I not been carefully watched, by either the master or some one of his family. I could not eat, I could not study; in fact, I was put to bed and lay there for some days. Oh, how I wept; how my poor head ached and how I suffered! Then I got somewhat over it and was able to eat and be up. Then I felt ashamed to go back amongst the other boys. All this finally passed and I got into my classes, where I found myself the least advanced of any of my schoolmates. I determined to push ahead and overtake the others, and for a few days I made great progress and showed that I could learn equal to any of them; but I soon fell into my dreamy, aircastle way and dropped behind again. My master was a very stern old man; but was sufficiently awake to his own interests to not be severe. He pressed me all he could and kept me along pretty well. Once in a while I would take a spurt and pull up at a great rate; then I would go slow again. Thus I kept along at the foot of the class, instead of at the head as I had determined to do.

My vacations were spent at home, and they were seasons of great pleasure to me. My father had no doubt inquired of the teacher how I was progressing,

and had got an answer much more satisfactory than I deserved; for he did not say more than that he would have been better pleased to have heard that I had stood at the head of my class. My mother merely said, "My dear, I am so delighted to have you at home with me again that words cannot tell how happy it makes me."

The few weeks that I remained at home, I spent pretty much as I pleased. The fields, the parks, the woods were all visited in turn, and I had my fill of idle speculation. I would start a train of thought and mark out a whole life such as I would like to live. Then start again and map out a life along another line. Sometimes I would follow up one of these trains of thought for several successive days, before I would get it completed. Then I would get into a train of romance, and if what I thought out had been written, it would have made an interesting story. Thus I spent many idle days, and consumed many valuable hours that should have been devoted to study.

When the time came for me to go to college I was not able to qualify, and had to stay with my tutor for another term. My father was very angry and gave me his mind in a more forcible way than I had ever heard him express it before. This made an impression on me different from what he expected. My disposition was to be led, not driven; I felt rebellious, although I knew that I deserved this censure, and when I returned to school I was more indifferent than ever.

Toward the end of this term the tutor did a very wise thing. He changed my room-mate, and gave me

a very kind and gentle dispositioned boy, who was a good student. We would show each other how to do any work that the one knew better than the other, and thus we were enabled to make great progress, and I soon found that I only wanted application to be able to lead them all. I studied hard before the examinations came off, and passed quite creditably.

Then I was sent to college, where I put in five years of rather jolly life. For the first few months I applied myself diligently and was well up in my studies. Then I became well acquainted with the "sports" and was always foremost at games, concerts, parties, etc. I had no taste for the water and took very little interest in boating of any kind; but in all kinds of land sports I was well to the front. Of course my studies were neglected, and entirely forgotten during vacation.

During my first vacation, my father took me with him on a trip to Ireland. This was my first real traveling experience, and although I was seasick, I enjoyed the trip immensely. My father so won on my affection by his kindness during that trip, that I believe he could have encouraged me to take a leading place at college, had he taken the right means of doing it; but he did not do so and the influence soon died away.

My next vacation was spent on the continent with my mother's brother. I was his favorite nephew, and well I might be, for in dispositions and tastes we were as like as two peas. We enjoyed ourselves in all kinds of harmless amusements to the fullest extent. He was scrupulously honorable and nothing that was

not strictly right would be tolerated; but for a jolly companion, give me Uncle Martin above all others that I have ever met.

My third and fourth vacations were spent at home, as I had got somewhat into disrepute with my father through not having passed as creditably as I should. So I roamed around, fished, hunted a little, visited Lord Kilraine, and spent a large share of my time with the young Lord George, then about eight or nine years of age, teaching him to ride his pony, shoot with the bow and arrow, and other youthful exploits.

I was a favorite with Lord Kilraine, and he said he always liked to see my face; for it was as open as a book, and he could read no bad in it. He thought my father was making a mistake by trying to make a scholar of me, although he admitted that he did not know what I was best suited for.

Lord Kilraine had several daughters older than Lord George, and when the little heir was born the father was so delighted and kept up his delight for so many years that, stern as he was, he was likely to spoil the boy. The little heir took to me wonderfully, and his affection was heartily reciprocated, for he was a very lovable child.

I left for college for the fifth year, carrying with me a mother's tearful blessing and a father's stern lecture. The severest things that had ever been said to me, had just been dinned into my ears, and when my mother in her angelic way, said, "My dear, I hope you will succeed," I replied, "It's no use, mother, I get no encouragement from father."

I did no better during this term. Sometimes I would attend to my studies for a few days, then sport and dreaming would get the better of me and I would drop back. At length the term was drawing near its close and I went in for cramming; but it was too late, and although I only wanted a few points of success, I was one of the "plucked."

I was ashamed to return home and was heartily sorry that I had not been more studious. In fact, I was ashamed to go anywhere; for I felt that everybody was saying, "There is the gentleman who was plucked after a five years' course." I had not thought about the public, or their opinions, but now I felt my disgrace keenly.

A fellow student not much better than myself, but who had got just enough marks to secure his graduation, and who lived near London, invited me to visit his home; but I told him that I must first go home and then, if possible, I would visit him for a short time. For I felt that I would want to hide myself for awhile.

I returned home. My mother kissed me and cried a little, and said she was so glad to see me, and that I was getting to be a fine-looking young man and that she was proud of me. I was so ashamed that, for the first time in my life, I felt it a relief to go from her presence.

My father returned at the usual hour in the evening, shook hands with me, asked after my health and said no more until after dinner, when he sent for me to come to him in the library. I went in and found him

alone standing with his back to the fire-place. I fairly trembled with shame until he got started, and then I trembled with anger; but answered never a word. He said I had disgraced my family. That he was ashamed to meet other men who had sons, and many things too hard for me to bear. He then asked me what I intended to do. I replied, "I am going to to see a college friend of mine for a few weeks, and in the mean time I will consider what I will do."

He replied that he thought I had better go to the colonies, for I could never hold up my head in England, and I said, "Very well," and turned and left the room.

I had not been a spendthrift; out of my liberal allowance of pocket money I had saved over a hundred pounds; so I felt that I was not altogether helpless and my pride gave me courage to do something desperate.

I went to my room, and the next morning got up and packed my portmanteau, and managing to avoid meeting my father, I bade my mother an affectionate farewell, telling her that I would go and visit my friend for a short time.

I went to my friend's home and stayed with him a couple of days, and wrote my mother from there a very affectionate letter. I then went to London, where I sold my expensive jewelry and chronometer, and bought a cheap watch and outfit, and secured a ticket for Melbourne, Australia, on a ship that would sail in three days. Having got my luggage on board

and fully prepared to sail, I sat down and wrote my mother, telling her how I loved her and that some day I would come back, when I had proven that I was not altogether worthless. I did not tell her my destination, nor the name of the vessel I was sailing by, and as I had booked under a fictitious name, I felt almost certain they would never be able to trace me.

To my father I wrote, merely saying that I was taking his advice and going abroad.

I mailed these letters and went on board my ship, and before they had reached their destination, I was beyond recall.

CHAPTER II.

Sea-sickness—Arrival at Melbourne—I go to the gold mines—Successes and failures—Become proprietor of a sheep-run—Cheated by my partner—Hire out in New Zealand—Start for home—Wreck of the “Watchword”—The Commodore and his party—I am put in the Commodore’s boat—Am unkindly treated—We sight land.

OUR ship had not got out of sight of land, before my troubles began and I had to take to my berth. For several days I was not able to be on deck, and when at last I crawled out I found the sea almost like glass, and the sails almost flapping against the masts. I inquired where we were and was told, “Off the coast of Spain, and within a hundred knots of opposite Gibraltar.” I stayed on deck for several hours, but was so weak from my sickness that I was unable to sit. The cook gave me some broth and I ate it, and then retired to my berth and had a good sound sleep. The next morning I ate quite a comfortable breakfast and went again on deck. The wind had increased in the night and we were moving slowly at the rate of six or seven knots. There was a slight motion to the ship and I soon found it affected me, so I went below and lay flat on my back in my berth.

For several days things went on in this way. So long as I lay perfectly still the only sickness that troubled me was home-sickness; but as soon as I would try to move about sea-sickness was added. I heard that I was to be hauled out on crossing the equator, to pay tribute to Neptune; but I sent the sailors half a crown, and I was not disturbed.

Our voyage was without incident and lasted over five months. More than half the time I was in my berth from *mal de mer*, and when at length we arrived at Sandridge pier I was so miserable that when I got to Melbourne, I had to go to the hospital for a week's nursing.

I did not expect that I would make a good sailor, and looked forward with apprehension to my journey; but had no idea that I would have proved such a miserable piece of float-wood. The captain said I was the worst hand on shipboard he had ever seen, and in fact, he never knew a woman to be as bad for such a length of time.

A week from the day I landed, I left the hospital and went to a regular boarding house. There I found several men preparing to go to the diggings, as everybody seemed crazy with gold-fever. After conversing with one of these men, he suggested that I should make one of the party, and I consented.

It took me a couple of days to purchase a few necessities for the mines, and then I left for Ballarat. I had determined not to return home until I had made a splendid fortune, which I expected soon to secure, and then I would go and astonish them all. My habit of

building aircastles served me well in this way: I can see the gold in my newly-discovered claim; then a purchaser with thousands of pounds comes and I sell out, bank my cash and take the best cabin in a steamship for home. Arriving, I take them unawares; they are all pleased and astonished, and I am the lion of the hour.

But these hopes were never realized. I worked a while for others, then located a claim of my own; roughed it and put up with the disappointments that followed as best I could. Sometimes a degree of good fortune would come, and once I had as much as a thousand pounds, then failure and almost actual want.

For eight years I stuck to mining, always hoping, but never realizing. Then a long attack of illness completed my discouragement, and I returned to Melbourne, like hundreds of others, almost penniless and thoroughly broken down.

I had adhered to the fictitious name under which I had shipped, and during all that time had never received a letter or a word from home. Had I now possessed enough to pay my passage I would have returned like the prodigal; but I did not possess as much and was too proud to write for it. So I determined to get into some situation, lay by my earnings and return as soon as I had accumulated enough.

I met a man in Melbourne who was sent out to Tasmania to procure specimens of birds for museums, and as he was looking for an assistant to accompany him I engaged myself to him. I spent two seasons

at this, when my savings would have carried me home; but as it was at the stormy season of the year I dared not venture on the voyage. So I took a situation to go to the country and work on a sheep run, intending to sail for home as soon as the season of fair weather came.

I did very well, and before the time arrived for my departure the proprietor offered me the foremanship of the run. I thought it better to take this for a year, when I could go home with a few pounds in my pocket, and not appear to have made such an utter failure of it.

Before my year was out, the proprietor offered me an eighth interest in the run for one thousand pounds, I to pay two hundred pounds down and the remainder to be taken from my share of the profits in three annual payments. The profits seemed to warrant this, and I estimated that at the expiration of five years I would be worth at least two thousand pounds. Then I could sell out and go home quite respectably. So I entered into this arrangement and everything went on well. At the end of the three years my capital was paid in and I had enough to warrant me in making a venture of another eighth to be paid off in two years.

At the end of about a year and a half, and when by putting in all my savings my second eighth was nearly paid for, one day the sheriff's officers came and seized everything visible. My partner—who resided in Melbourne—had been running the thing into debt until it was irretrievably gone, and had sailed for England.

I went again to Melbourne, not worth enough to buy a passage ticket, and determined to write for money and go home. I sat down and wrote a letter to my father, and told him of all my mishaps and experiences and asked him to send me money enough to return with. I put this letter into my pocket and started for the post office, intending to get a stamp and post it.

In going down town I had to pass the office where my partner's business was being closed up, and I called to see how things were turning out. I there met a squatter from New Zealand, and got into conversation with him and found that he had quite an extensive place. The sheriff's officer told him that I had managed our run the best of any in the country, and that it was an outrage on me the way my partner had used me. The squatter said he wanted to get a good man on his run and that if I would go for a year, he would pay my passage and all expenses, and give me two hundred pounds. The sheriff's officer advised me to take it, and I thought it would be more independent than to send for money. So I concluded to save my postage and go to New Zealand.

The day after the next I was enjoying one of my anti-bilious attacks, which continued for nearly a week in crossing to New Zealand. In a few days more I was installed in my new situation, where things went on very smoothly.

During the whole of that year, I never once faltered in my determination to return to England as soon as my term was up. I had been absent a long time and

all things would be greatly changed. Very likely my mother was in heaven; for she was never strong. My father bade fair to live to a good old age. If he were living he would surely welcome me; but if dead, he had doubtless made provision for me in his will. I would go back and risk it. My wages would enable me to buy a ticket, and I would have enough left, on landing, to fit myself out with a decent suit, and then I could return looking respectable enough.

I had lived so savingly that I was actually in rags, and was compelled to buy a suit of clothes before I could sail for home; but as I was going steerage, and no person would know me, I bought a very cheap suit, a cheap soft felt hat and a pair of shoes.

The ticket bought, I took a piece of very strong linen, and made a belt to go over one shoulder and under the other arm, and sewed my remaining sovereigns into it and tied it at my side with a strong string.

Fully equipped and ready to start, just as the stormy season was about to close, I thought I should escape a large degree of suffering from my old trouble, sea-sickness.

I went on board the "Watchword" about an hour before she was ready to sail, carrying my entire luggage in a small hand-bag.

The day was fine and a gentle breeze blowing. The good-bys were said to the few passengers who were accompanying us, and we stood out to sea. For three days the weather was all that we could desire; a gentle breeze blowing from the west carried us directly

in our course for the Cape at five or six knots an hour. Even I was not disturbed much in my stomach, and I sat most of the time on deck and speculated.

At last, on my way home—how my heart beat at the thought! Every hour carrying me nearer to my loved ones. What changes awaited me? How would they receive me?

On the morning of the fourth day out the wind had risen considerably and had changed to the south-east, or right in our teeth, and the sky looked very threatening. Although I was no sailor, I could see that we were in for a rough time. I saw that we were on tack as close to the wind as she could be held. The sea had not had time to rise yet; but from the choppy construction of the waves that the change of wind had made, and the appearance of an increasing storm, I predicted that I would not be long on my legs.

Before noon the wind had risen to a gale, the rain was pouring down, and the ship was rolling and pitching in the waves, and I was trying to resign myself to fate.

For several days—it may have been three or it may have been twice that number—the most terrible storm raged, and I lay in my berth; or rather, held myself in my berth by sheer strength, the sickest man that ever lived.

The hurrying of feet on the deck, the whistling of the wind through the rigging, the flapping of sails, the shouts of command, brought no terror to me. The sea yawning to receive me would not have frightened me, for it would have brought me relief.

At length I became aware of a terrible excitement. I heard crying, and everybody seemed filled with fear, and there was general confusion. I made out that the ship had sprung a leak. I heard the pumps working, and the passengers praying, and I concluded that my sickness would soon end in the sea.

How long this excitement continued I do not know; but it must have lasted for some days, when I discovered that I could hear the water splashing under the floor of our cabin.

The storm had evidently ceased; but the water kept gaining on the pumps. My cabin was deserted, its occupants preferring to remain on deck, and I lay alone in my berth. Except the continual working of the pumps, all was still, and I began to speculate whether I would rather go down in the cabin or sink with the deck. Then I thought that the passengers and crew would likely take to the boats; but so long as the pumps worked I knew they were still on the ship.

By and by some one came down into the cabin, and looked about to see if there was any person left. Seeing me he came over and told me that I had better go on deck, for the ship was sure to sink in a few hours. It was the cook. He brought me something to eat, and when it was taken he helped me to the deck, and made me as comfortable as possible.

We remained two days longer on the ship, and the morning before we left the lookout sighted land in the direction in which we were drifting. My sickness was pretty well gone, and I ate of the food given me by the cook and felt a great deal better.

During the forenoon the captain set to work to provide food and water, preparatory to our taking to the boats. A good feed was taken all around and the boats lowered. The captain gave one boat in charge of the mate, one in charge of the second mate and took one himself. The other and smaller boat he gave in charge of a gentleman who was called the Commodore—a friend of the captain. This man was Commodore of a prominent yacht club in England. He was one of a party of friends (composed of the Commodore, two young men, a lady and her niece) who had shipped on the “Watchword” because of their acquaintance with the captain.

When all the boats were full I was still to be placed, and as there seemed no room for me in any of the others, the captain put me into the Commodore’s boat and told him to take care of me, for I had been very sick. The Commodore demurred in very strong language, saying that his boat was none too large for his friends and he did not want any riff-raff company. The captain said he was sorry to have to put me in; but there was no help for it, so I was left to take my chances with the Commodore’s boat.

In crossing the deck I saw an axe lying beside the bulwarks; picking this up, I took it with me, thinking that it might be useful if we landed where there were no inhabitants.

We all sailed away in company toward the land, which was not visible from our boats. The wind was light and we did not make much headway until night closed in. The ship still floated as the darkness hid

her from view; but in the morning she was nowhere to be seen.

About nine o'clock that evening a heavy mist arose, which seemed to climb up from the water, and shortly afterward the wind sprung up and increased all night. In the morning it was blowing a very sharp breeze. Not one of the boats was in sight, nor could we see the land. We had a small compass on board and also a glass. The Commodore scanned the horizon and imagined he saw the land and then made for it.

I had been put into the bow and in front of the masts, and the rest were all in the body of the boat. My quarters were very cramped, and suffering as I was from my late sickness it was scarcely endurable. The Commodore put me on short allowance at once and gave me unmistakably to understand that I was an encumbrance that he chafed under enduring. He called me "old man," whenever he addressed me, and spoke in the most unkind manner. I did not reply to him, but submitted silently, as I was too sick and weak to use any energy for any purpose.

The wind being contrary, we tacked all day, and at night we were still many miles from the land, which appeared a sort of speck on the water. The Commodore kept up his process of tacking all night, or as long as the wind kept up; for it fell, some time in the night, to a dead calm.

Weary and sick and faint I had lain down in my cramped position and slept as well as I could, but had to wake and change my position many times.

The small amount of food given me by the Com-

modore had not much increased my strength, and I felt as miserable as it was possible to do. Some time in the night I arose and stood leaning for a long time against the mast to overcome the effects of my cramping. I then sat down and rested on the seat for some time, and then lay down again and slept.

CHAPTER III.

We near the land—The Commodore's grudging hospitality—Annie's kindness—The boat is driven ashore—I reach the land—Help the others ashore—Wreck of the boat—Am injured—Heartless conduct of my companions—My first meal on land.

ON the morning of the third day I awoke about six o'clock and found myself so faint and cramped from the position I had lain in that I could scarcely move. Little by little I drew myself into a sitting position and began to take in the surroundings. The fog had lifted and there was not a breath of wind stirring; but a long, low sea still rolled, which lifted and then lowered us soothingly. My sickness had entirely left me and I felt much better, but very weak and hungry. I looked in every direction for the land, for I had lost my bearings. By and by I sighted it, just to our left, apparently about fifteen or eighteen miles distant.

It was not long before those who had slept aroused themselves, and after discussing the surroundings, the Commodore suggested that they should eat. Knowing that I would not be allowed to share it with them, or eat until they were through, I changed my position, so as to turn my face to the bow of the boat.

that I might not see them while they were eating; for now that I was no longer sick, I felt that I would have given all that I possessed in the world for a good meal; nor would I have been over-fastidious, either as to the character of the food, or its mode of preparation.

Few people know by experience the agony of an intensely hungry man, sitting and listening to others eating their fill, while he is not so much as allowed to smell the food. It is no exaggeration to say, that that morning, sitting in that boat, with my back to those eaters, I suffered the most exquisite pain. I thought they would never finish their meal, and I am sure they loitered over it for fully one hour. At last I heard the welcome voice of the Commodore, in his most unpleasant tone, shout loudly, "I say, old man, would you like a biscuit this morning?" Suiting the action to the word, he threw it toward me, as it might have been thrown to a dog, and it fell on the bottom of the boat. I picked it up and ate it with great avidity. I think I had never before eaten anything that tasted as sweet as that piece of hardtack did. When I had devoured it, the Commodore handed Charlie a cup of water to give to me, which I gladly drank. My hunger not being half satisfied I made so bold as to request the Commodore to kindly let me have another biscuit, as I was still very hungry, but he refused in the most peremptory manner, saying that I "might thank my stars that I had anything at all." The young woman Annie held an undertoned conversation with the Commodore for a moment, and

then she slipped her hand into the bag and tossed me another biscuit. I looked my thanks to her and ate it, and then asked for another cup of water, which I secured through the same medium. Having finished these I again turned my face to the bow of the boat. I had only sat for a short time, when I began to feel sleepy, and leaning my head on the gunwale of the boat and covering my face with my hat, I was soon in the land of dreams, and in the next few hours I passed again through many of the scenes of my childhood and youth, in my dear old home in merry England.

About noon I awoke with a start, and sitting up, I found that the wind had begun to rise, and our bow was directed toward the land. The wind continued to rise, and in an hour's time was blowing at a fair rate, and we were driving smartly toward the shore. If the wind continued to blow and no fog arose to obscure our view, we would soon reach the land. I again turned and asked for something to eat, and another biscuit and drink were given to me as before.

The wind kept on rising, and we were soon within a short distance of the land, and were able to make observations as to its character and the prospects of finding an easy landing. The land was evidently either an island of from four to five miles wide, or a narrow headland. While it was low—the highest point not being more than from two hundred to three hundred feet above the sea—the shores were all more or less precipitous and rocky. By this time

the wind, which had continued to increase, had raised quite a swell, and the chances of landing easily and safely were against us.

I turned and looked at the Commodore, to read his thoughts if possible, as to our prospects. He was standing and gazing most anxiously at the land, scanning it from end to end, to discover some bay or beach where a safe landing could be made. At length, apparently having satisfied himself that no such place presented itself, our bow was turned toward the east end, or leeward of the land, and we were shortly making our way around the island at a distance of less than an eighth of a mile from the shore. As we passed around the east end, we discovered a place where an inclined projection was to be seen which, if once attained, would afford a means of reaching the top of the rock. The Commodore headed our boat straight for it. The waves were beating against the rocks and it looked to me like a very dangerous undertaking; but as the Commodore did not ask any one's opinion, he was allowed to have his own way. Being in the bow I felt that my chances of getting to shore were equal to those of any of the others, so rising painfully to my feet, and holding my axe in one hand, I was prepared for a spring, at the most opportune moment. The Commodore seeing me rise, commanded me with an oath to "sit down." I obeyed, but crouched in such a position as to be ready for a spring.

I soon became aware that the others were standing, and beginning to crowd forward, preparatory to land-

ing in a hurry in case of an emergency. When about one hundred feet from shore, as we settled between two waves, our keel struck upon a rock with such force as to throw all those who were standing into the bottom of the boat, while she trembled and creaked as if she were going to pieces. With one hand on the gunwale and the other on my axe I quietly awaited events. The next wave lifted us and threw the boat forward, and as she sank again between the waves, within twenty feet of the shore, she struck again, this time on a sharp-pointed rock, which pierced clear through the bottom, and impaled her for some seconds. The bow, being the heaviest, began to settle, and thinking that the best time for action had come, I threw the axe ashore and it happily struck on the ledge. I then stepped on the gunwale and sprang as far as possible toward the nearest point. Rising to the surface a stroke or two brought me to the shore, where I was soon safe on the ledge. The succeeding wave lifted the boat and threw her on the shore, the bow striking within a few inches of me. I at once caught hold of the boat and held on with all my strength, as the receding wave began to draw her from me. I barely succeeded in holding her while the occupants scrambled with all haste to shore, the Commodore bringing a small box of biscuits. This was scarcely accomplished, when the next incoming wave lifted the boat and threw her with great force forward, crushing me between her and the rock. I thought my end was come; but, though severely injured, I managed, when the receding wave relieved

me of the pressure of the boat, to crawl up the ledge out of the reach of the waves.

Looking toward the boat, which had been carried out about fifty feet, I saw her sink in the sea. I then turned my eyes toward the top of the cliff, hoping to see some of my companions, but none of them were visible. They had safely reached the top of the rock, and not one of them had turned to give one look or thought to the wounded man who had risked his life to save them. For, had I not held the boat to the shore, it would have been utterly impossible for them all to have got safely to land.

I thought, surely they will come to my help as soon as the great excitement under which they have all labored has had time to subside, and they have missed me; so I lay still for some time. The tide was flowing in and the waves were rising higher and higher, and soon they began to reach my feet. I then commenced shouting for help, but no answer came. Being compelled to drag myself up higher, I tried my strength, and finding that no bones were broken, I determined, if possible, to reach the top. I managed to get on my hands and knees, and taking my axe in my hand I crawled slowly to the top of the rock, a distance of thirty or forty feet. The agony that I endured was something terrible; but as I saw that I need expect no help from those who were sharers of my dangers, I had to "grin and bear it."

It was now about five o'clock. Since receiving my injuries a great thirst had come upon me, and I felt that I must secure a drink of water or die. Looking

around I saw the tops of a few bushes, evidently growing in a small gully about five hundred feet distant. This I determined to reach, in the hope that I should find water and at least, shade. I can scarcely tell how I reached the spot, crawling on my hands and knees, and making many stops in my painful journey. I was rewarded by finding, in the lowest part, a small moss-grown spot, with damp earth around it. In the middle of this I scooped out, with my hands, a little hole a few inches deep, in the soft muck, and then sat down anxiously to await the results. Little by little the moisture settled into my small well, and it was perhaps not as long as it seemed, when by the aid of a large leaf, formed into the shape of a cup, I was able to procure a swallow of water. Under the shadow of a small bush I lay down and waited impatiently for each swallow to collect, when I would scoop it out with my leaf cup and drink it with great relish, regardless of the fact that it was nearly half mud. In spite of my bruises, I began to feel somewhat refreshed.

The sun was setting; the shadows were around, and I had just come to the conclusion that I must make a supperless bed under the little tree that was sheltering me, when I heard a slight movement near by, and looking in the direction from whence it came, I saw a small frog spring toward my little well. Reaching a stick that lay near, I aimed a blow at it, and his legs, eaten raw, formed my first solid morsel on our lonely island. With the aid of the stick, I was able to deepen and widen my well considerably, and before

I fell asleep for the night it furnished me with sufficient water to almost entirely satisfy my thirst.

My bruises had now become so developed that I was able to locate them definitely, and before lying down for the night, I applied poultices of the mud that I had excavated from my well, to the worst spots. Then reclining upon the ground, beneath my friendly bush, I was soon in a restful sleep.

CHAPTER IV.

The Commodore's brutality—My first breakfast—My axe is taken—A gloomy day and night—Experience of my comrades in bushwhacking—I explore the island—The Commodore's demand—I take "French leave"—A comfortable hiding-place.

THE next morning I was awakened by a noise near me. Upon raising my head I saw the Commodore approaching, followed by the whole company. As soon as he saw my little well, he gave a chuckle, and cried to the others, "come on, here's water." I raised myself painfully on my elbow and begged of him, as I was unable to forage, to spare me a drink; for my thirst had returned nearly as severe as it had been the night before, and I felt very feverish from my bruises. With a blasphemous ejaculation he took up my leaf cup and scooped out every drop of water from my well and distributed it among his companions; not one of them evinced any pity for me. Having emptied my little well, he took my cup with him, saying it would "prove useful" to them. Neither he nor any of the others inquired about my wounds, although they could see that I was bruised and that I had dressed my sores in the rude way I have described.

After the Commodore and his friends had departed, I managed to get into a sitting position, although with very great difficulty, for I felt much sorer than I had the night before. I managed, however, to reach another leaf, which I formed into a cup like the first, and waited for the water to gather in my well, a mouthful at a time, and thus was my thirst gradually quenched again.

The great difficulty that now stared me in the face, was how to get something to eat, for I realized that, though it were to prove the saving of my life, not one of my companions would turn a hand to help me.

I reached out as far as I could and tasted the leaves, buds, bark, etc., of the bushes to find if any of them should prove at all palatable; but not one was fit to be eaten, except the leaves of a very small bush, which had a sort of mucousy taste, something like the buds of the basswood. Having eaten these I began to dig in the earth, in the hope of finding roots that might serve me. I succeeded in finding a few pungent roots, something like the krinkle. I had secured and eaten a few of these, when I heard voices, and presuming that my companions were returning to secure any water that might have settled in my well, I hastily seized my cup and scooped up nearly every drop that had gathered, and drank it off. Before I could get the cup from my lips the Commodore broke through the bushes in a great hurry, and seeing what I had done, he uttered a terrible imprecation and struck me a terrific blow with his open hand on the side of my head, which completely stunned me and laid

me level on the ground. This blow caused me great pain in the head for many days, and through rupturing the tympanum of the ear left me permanently deaf on that side. His friends came on, but what they said or did I cannot tell; I have simply a confused idea that one of the young men called me a vile name. Discovering that I had found roots fit to eat, they began a search for my little krinkles, and when they were gone and I was again able to sit up, I searched in vain for a single root, so completely had they gone over the whole ground.

On leaving me this time they carried off my axe. This gave me great anxiety; for, used to bushwhacking as I was, I knew and appreciated the value of it, and felt that, if robbed of it, my means of procuring food — should this prove to be an uninhabited island, as I then had a grave suspicion it would be found to be — was minimized.

Amongst the leaves under the bushes I found faint and stale traces of either sheep or goats, and felt hopeful that a supply of food might be found in something of this kind.

Evening again drew near and I took good care to keep the water low in my well, for I knew that with plenty of water, I could recuperate, though I had but little to eat. I ate a little of the moss that grew on the muck, and a few slender moss-roots that I found below the moss, and had concluded that I had finished my evening meal, when hearing something stir, I looked and discovered another little frog. I soon killed it and sent it to look for its mate. Taking

another drink and emptying my well I lay down to think.

A sadder feeling than that which crept over me it would be hard to imagine. I had passed through many trials and hardships in my life; but with a good constitution, and naturally hopeful disposition, I had always looked forward to the future with hope, but what was there here? Crushed almost to death by the boat, weakened by hunger until I was unable to search for food, my head fairly bursting with pain from the blow I had received, on an uninhabited island, with no means of escape and the only human beings within reach playing the part of cruel enemies. Hope died within me and I wept. Oh, that this might prove my last night on earth; that I might fall asleep and never wake again in life! I thought of home—so long ago it seemed an age since I had known that home. I wondered if they were all alive; and, if alive, did they ever think of me? Would they care if they knew where I now was and how circumstanced? Then I thought of the Commodore and his companions. Why do they seem to despise me as they do, and treat me as if I were a loathsome thing, so far beneath them? Perhaps if they knew my family they would feel flattered by the attention of any of its members; but they did not know. Perhaps they thought I would prove a burden to them, and not be able to help procure supplies. Perhaps they hoped to hail a passing ship in a short time and would not need any service that I could render. If they should hail a ship while I was in my present state, would

they tell the captain of my presence or leave me on the island alone to die?

Thus my thoughts ran on, until becoming confused I at length sank into a restless sleep. Between sleeping and waking, and dreaming fearful dreams I spent the long, weary night somehow, and as soon as the day dawned I sat up, and taking my cup I drank a good, long draught from my well; leaving enough water, however, to cause the Commodore to think that I had not tasted any, should he pay me another visit this morning.

Sitting moodily and wondering what I would do for something to eat, my attention was attracted by a slight fluttering noise, and a chirp or two in the branches over my head. To my delight I saw a bird about the size of a small robin, perched upon a branch not more than three feet away, looking curiously at me. I cautiously reached for my stick, and with a quick blow brought it to the ground, and seizing it, cut off its head with my pocket-knife. Fearing lest the Commodore should come and rob me of my breakfast, I snatched off its feathers, dissected it and ate its raw flesh with a greed that would have astonished a Christian. It seems to me now that a kind providence sent me that bird, for I never saw another on the island approaching its species. I hid the feathers under leaves, ate a few moss roots, took another drink and lay down again in anticipation of a visit from the Commodore.

I had not lain many minutes, when the Commodore and his friends made their appearance, one of the

young men carrying my axe. Thinking that I was asleep, they quietly appropriated my second leaf cup and helped themselves to the water from my well, until it was entirely drained.

After searching fruitlessly for more krinkles, they left, but stopped at a little distance and held a council. It seemed that the gully in which I was located started a little south of where I lay and ran northward to the sea shore, growing gradually deeper as it neared the bluff shore. As there was no water in it now, it evidently served as a drain to carry off the water in the rainy season. Just where I reached it there was a tiny spring, its waters soaking into the mud and earth. The little well that I made drew this moisture out of the earth, and I was thus able to collect it. Enough moisture, however, remained in the gully to cause vegetable growth through its entire length, and this accounted for the small trees and shrubs growing in its hollow. The Commodore and his party had evidently followed the shore to the right from the place of landing and had entered this gully some distance to the north of my place, but not finding a spring, were unable to procure water sufficient for so many. They consequently decided to remove their camp close to mine, in the hope that they would either find water there or be able to appropriate what I had found.

To prepare the place, one of them began using my axe vigorously, cutting down the small brush; but before he had struck many blows I heard a cry and a rush, and a good deal of commotion and confused

talking. The axe had evidently glanced, and he had succeeded in cutting himself. It was probably the first time he had ever undertaken to use such a tool. It was some time before he was taken care of; but when this was done I heard the Commodore, in a brusque and swaggering way, assert that he would undertake the job; he, however, had not struck half a dozen blows, when a volley of oaths and a string of imprecations upon me and my tool, coupled with the words "broken head," convinced me that he had caught the axe in its descent on an overhead limb, which had caused the axe to strike his head. After a little the third man tried it, and I could tell by the blows that he was working very cautiously. He had worked but a few minutes, when an exclamation from him, with a few low curses, led me to believe that he had struck a small bush in such a way as to cause it to switch him smartly in the face. The job seemed now to be abandoned, and the Commodore, seizing the axe, threw it over the bushes in my direction, yelling out as he did so that he hoped the beastly tool would cut my "infernal old head off."

I soon heard their voices passing northward out of hearing, and I hoped that they were about to leave this part of the island altogether. They very likely would have done this, but for the fear that they might not be able to procure water elsewhere.

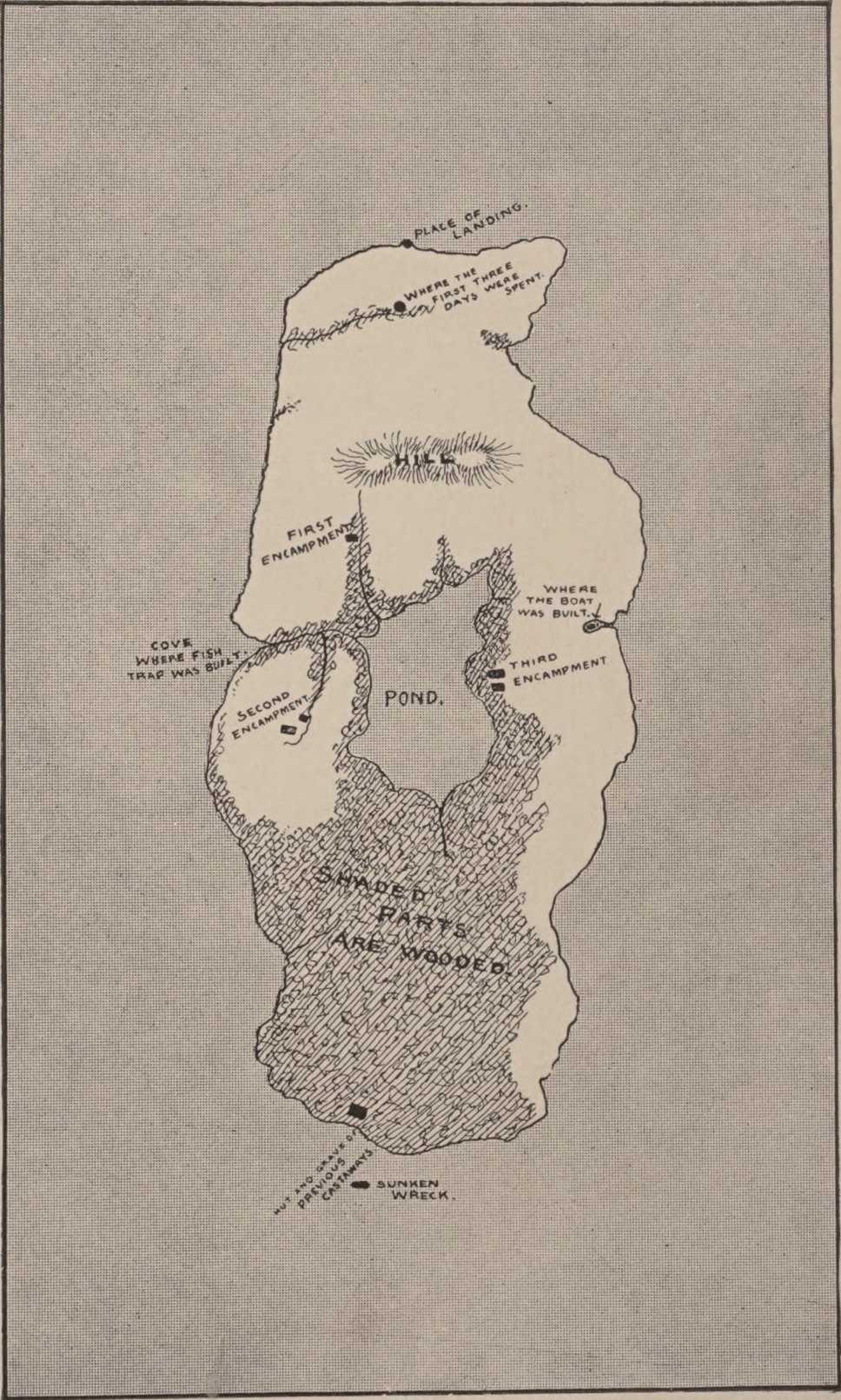
About noon the wind began to blow rather strongly, and as the heat was not so oppressive as in the earlier part of the day, I determined to try my strength and find if it was at all possible for me to walk. After

gaining my feet with the greatest difficulty, I managed to hobble to the axe, which lay about six feet away. I then cut a strong staff out of a small tree and with the axe for a cane in one hand and the staff in the other I practiced my limbs for a little while, walking backward and forward a few steps. At length I concluded to move out of the bushes to a higher spot of ground for the purpose of viewing my surroundings.

We had landed on the east end of the island. The island appeared, as far as I could see, to be not more than from a mile to a mile and a half wide in its widest part. The east end was almost level for about a mile inland, though rugged and barren, except in the few small gullies which were to be seen. It was about forty feet above the sea, with precipitous and rocky shores. The place where we landed was the only one on the east where we could have ascended the cliff, although there were two or three good approaches on the north side farther west.

Looking westward about a mile from my standpoint, in the middle of the island, a rocky hill arose to a point about two hundred feet above the sea. Beyond the sides of this hill, in the distance, I could see the tops of trees; but whether they were large or small I could not tell, for the foggy state of the atmosphere made it difficult for me to judge of their size.

Around the top of the hill I could see some large-sized birds flying, and I concluded that, if not too late in the season, their nests would furnish us with eggs, and they would themselves, if captured, furnish food.



THE ISLAND,

Here, then, was the place where a living could be found, if I only had the strength to accomplish the journey. My long fasting and bruised condition made this very problematical, and so I determined to crawl back to my nest and wait another day or two. I turned to go, when I heard voices, and looking northward I saw the Commodore coming, with the young man called Herbert. They reached me before I got back to my lair, when the Commodore accosted me after this fashion :

“ Well, old man, so you have got out, have you? I think it is time; and now I want you to stir yourself and build a cabin for the ladies just below you there, and dig a well, and then start and forage for food. We have concluded that you have lived long enough in idleness, and if you don't get to work and help get a living, we will dump you into the sea, a thing we ought to have done when you were imposed upon us by that bull-headed Captain of the “ Watchword.” Perhaps you can handle that infernal tool that you brought along from the ship, without chopping your legs off—we can't. It has laid one of our party up and you will have to do his work. Do you hear?”

I replied that I heard, and as soon as I was able, I thought I would show myself competent to handle the axe and do my share of the work.

The Commodore and Herbert went to my well and drank, and then returned the way they came. I stood leaning on my staff and axe until they were out of sight.

I then began to reason thus: “ If I remain here the

Commodore will compel me to do work that I am utterly unable to perform, and half starve me at that. I may as well use what strength I can command to reach some place where he will not find me for some time, and there recuperate my health and strength."

I had lost my hat in our struggle in landing and my head ached from the Commodore's blow; but as the fog was increasing and somewhat obscuring the rays of the sun, I determined to make an effort to reach the hill that lay before me, and so I set out.

Fear and indignation both played a part in urging me to greater effort than my strength warranted, and an hour later found me at the foot of the hill, on its south side. Desperation gave me courage and strength, and slowly and painfully I began the ascent, moving around the hill as I rose higher and higher until, as I neared the top, I found myself on the west side. Here near the top was a flat place, the west side not rising as high by twenty or thirty feet as the east side; and it was on this flat spot—comprising about two acres—that the birds had their nests. I soon found some good eggs—for it proved to be not too late in the season—about the size of hens' eggs. I had drank off about a dozen of them, when it struck me that it would be wise to use moderation, and put the others aside. Wearied nearly to death, I sat down on a stone to rest and view the landscape; but the fog, which had been thickening, shut most of this out. I discovered, however, that on the northwest side of this hill was a strip of wooded territory, in which there was likely to be water, and as the distance was not

more than an eighth of a mile, I made up my mind to reach it.

The birds, disturbed by an intruder of a kind with which they were unacquainted, kept flying around and near me. They were about the size of a small, common goose, with wings proportionately larger than their bodies. They soon began to venture so close to me that I thought it possible to strike one with my staff. I succeeded in doing this and then cut off its head with my knife, to allow it to bleed.

I now collected as many eggs as I could carry safely in my pockets, and taking up my fowl, began my descent. I found at the foot of the hill a very convenient place for a camp. Springs in the hillside made quite a little rivulet of good, cool water, and the trees growing in the depression through which it ran were sufficiently large to form an excellent shade; while for some distance on either side of this strip of living wood, there were dry fallen trees that must—in the years gone by—have been uprooted in some violent storm.

I gathered some dry wood, and whittling it with my knife, prepared to make a fire, provided the few matches that I had in my pocket, in a little case, had not become worthless through having got wet when I jumped into the sea. I was delighted at last when one of them burned, and my kindlings lighted. I found it a painful job, but I eventually succeeded in gathering sufficient wood to keep up my fire all night.

I plucked and dressed my fowl and fastened it to the end of a pole in front of the fire and left it to

roast. Placing a pole against a tree, and cutting branches and laying them against it, I made a sort of barricade in which to sleep, and put some branches on the ground under this for a bed.

Preparing this bed and getting more wood occupied some time, and my fowl being fairly well roasted on one side, I put some eggs in the hot ashes to bake, and soon made a good supper of substantial food. Changing the position of the remainder of my fowl before the fire and heaping on more wood in such a position as to make it last all night, I lay down to sleep, in a more contented frame of mind than at any time since leaving the "Watchword," and expected to sleep soundly, in spite of my aching head and bruised body.

CHAPTER V.

I am prevented from sleeping—The goats—I kill a kid—My trap—Capture of the goat—A hard day's work—My bed-chamber—A sound night's sleep—My pottery manufacture—A reverie—An exploration of the swamp—Discovered by the Commodore—His brutal greeting.

HOW vain are our expectations. When I lay down, expecting to sleep soundly, in spite of my pains, I had not anticipated that animal life on the island, unused to firelight, would be attracted to it, wishing to make an investigation of this, to them, new element. If I had any slight fears of interruption, it was from the Commodore; but I did not much fear that he would dare to trust himself so far from his camp in the night. My interruptions came from quite another direction than from human foes.

I had no sooner composed myself for sleep than I became aware of noises that I had not heard or noticed before. At first they excited my fear, for I thought they might proceed from wild beasts, which would make things very unpleasant for me. I knew that all wild beasts were afraid of fire, and so long as it burned brightly I was safe; but to keep it burning brightly required vigilance, and I felt sure that if I

once fell asleep, there would be no waking me until weary nature was fully satisfied.

Knowing that knowledge of evil is preferable to fear of evil, I arose, and moving to a little distance from the fire and hiding myself in the shadow of a bush, I tried to discern the character of the intruders. I had not long to wait when I heard, at a short distance from me, a faint bleat, which might have proceeded from a lamb or a kid. As soon as I heard this my fears all departed and I returned to my barricade. I remembered the traces I had seen before, and I reasoned that if either sheep or goats were safe abroad at night on the island, there were no beasts of prey there.

Little by little the noise and tramping drew nearer, as the animals became bolder in their investigations. At length I got occasional glimpses of them, as they would step further forward, gaze at the fire and then retreat. Nearer and nearer the bolder or more foolish ones would go at each succeeding visit, until at last they would approach within ten feet of the fire, stand looking at it, occasionally stamping their feet, then with a stamp and sort of snort, they would withdraw, and others would take their places. I lay in my barricade of bushes and watched—with too much interest to allow of my growing sleepy—this flock of wild goats; for I saw in them our future food supply, should we be compelled to remain any great length of time on this island.

They soon found that my barricade would serve them as a sort of breastwork, behind which they drew

up close to the fire, and then stepping to one side of it, stood gazing at the wonder. None of them seemed to have observed me, so intent were they looking into the fire. Presently a sleek kid, less than half grown, stepped from behind my barricade and well forward toward the fire. As it stood gazing and blinking, within three feet of me, I thought it a good chance to get a supply of food for several days, and, at the risk of frightening the flock, I cautiously raised my heavy staff, and brought it down with great force upon the back of its neck. It fell at once, and reaching out, I drew it in front of my barricade, and taking out my knife, bled it. A great commotion now ensued amongst the goats. They seemed to know that something had happened of a frightful nature, and they stampeded back to some distance from the fire. It was fully an hour before they again became bold enough to draw as near as they did at first.

While the goats were regaining their courage, I stripped the skin off my kid, dressed it, and cutting a stick for a gambril, thrust it through the hind legs and hung it in front of my fire on the pole where I first hung my fowl. I then put more fuel on the fire, thinking that if I could not sleep my kid might as well be cooking. The goats seeing me moving about, seemed quite as much surprised at me and as little afraid of me as they were in the first place of the fire. They were soon back acting much as before, and pressing very close to the end of my barricade.

Noticing that many of them gave suck, the thought struck me that if it were possible to capture and

domesticate these, we would be able to get a supply of milk. How to capture one in my present state was the difficulty. If I had been strong and had some place to imprison it, the task would have been an easy one. But thinking on a desirable object often brings the means of securing it. The only article that I had about me strong enough to hold one of the goats by the neck, was the linen belt that I carried my money in. Growing just at the end of my barricade, was a small tough tree of some kind of oak, about the size of a man's wrist. It occurred to me that if I securely fastened one end of my belt to this tree and made a slip-noose on the other end, the goat could be firmly held. Slipping off the belt, I soon fixed the noose and fastened the other end firmly to the tree, about two feet from the ground. I then gathered a small bunch of tall, tough grass from beside the little stream, with which to fasten the noose, so as to prevent it choking the captive. This done I placed a bush near the end of the barricade and secreted myself behind it, to quietly await events.

The goats having seen me moving about were again timid for some time, but eventually grew bolder. It was, however, some time before just the kind of goat that I wished to capture came within reach. Presently a large she goat, with a little kid close behind her, came up and moved near to my bush; other goats pressed her a little and she stepped forward within reach. Slipping my hand under the bush, I caught her firmly by the fore foot and rising up at the same time, I lifted her fore parts from the ground, and

catching her neck under my arm had my noose over her head in a twinkling. Then taking the bunch of grass I soon had it fixed so that it could not choke her. During this operation, she bleated and struggled to the utmost of her strength of lung and limb, which had the effect of so frightening the flock that scarcely a sound could be heard after I got through with this job.

My captive sprang and bleated, and bleated and sprang, until she was completely exhausted. I fixed up my fire again, and taking some of the branches of my barricade to a little distance, so as not to be too much interrupted by the goat's antics, I lay down and, in spite of all the noise and excitement, I fell asleep, and did not wake again until the broad light of day was on the earth.

I soon stirred up my fire and renewed the fuel, and turned my kid on its extemporized spit. Then, after bathing in the little rivulet, and taking a good draught of its cool waters, I ate a hearty breakfast of the remainder of my food and some eggs cooked in the hot ashes. I wondered how I had been able to accomplish all the work that I had done since leaving my camp yesterday; but no doubt plenty of food and drink had given me such strength as I could not otherwise have possessed. A hard day's work now lay before me, and I felt quite unable to do all that I felt must be done.

The captive goat must be imprisoned, and a pen for that purpose must be built; so, going to some distance to one side of the gully, amongst the dry trees, I cut

small logs and built a pen about three feet high, after which I cut heavier logs and put them on top, so that she would not be able to dislodge them in her efforts to escape. I then covered this pen over and put some stones on the top of all. I soon had her safe in this pen and my belt back again under my shirt.

The next thing to get was some kind of vessels in which fluid could be kept, and from which to drink. I found, at a short distance from my rude abode, a soil, partly of clay, which I believed I could mould into earthen ware. Sharpening a hard stick, I loosened a quantity of this soil and carried it to my camp, where I mixed it with water from the brook, to the right consistency, and then formed several small vessels, about the size of coffee cups, and some larger ones like bowls, and others about the size of earthen pans, such as I have seen farmers use to keep milk in, and two or three for pitchers. These I placed where both the heat of the fire and sun would reach them, so as to dry them ready for burning.

The sun being very hot, seemed to increase my headache, and I set to work to make a hat. I took twigs and bent them in the shape of a hoop the size of my head, and then wove large leaves into these in such a way as to make both the crown and brim. I cannot say that it was either beautiful or artistic, but it certainly answered the purpose well, and proved a great comfort to me.

I now thought my goat should be milked, but as she had been so excited and overheated I knew the milk would not be fit to use, and so I allowed it to fall upon

the ground. By putting a pole across the pen over her back and head, so that she could not spring up, and another pole against her side, which held her against the side of the pen, I was able to milk her without much difficulty. I then brought her some grass from the gully. She refused to eat, and kept up an almost incessant bleating; I felt sure, however, that she would soon become quite domesticated.

Being nearly exhausted with my labors, and my kid having got fairly well cooked, I ate a very hearty meal of kid and eggs, finishing with some roots of krinkle and small leaves from a bush, similar to the one I had found in my first camp. I then lay down and slept for a couple of hours. After rising I climbed the hill for more eggs, and brought back as many as I could carry in the back of my coat, holding the skirts and collar with my arm like a loose bag. The fog was too thick for me to make observations on this trip, and so I did not tarry long on the hill-top.

It was now about five o'clock, and as the Commodore had not yet found me I concluded that he would not come that day, and so I set to work to prepare for sleeping and keeping up my fire. I first prepared plenty of fuel and placed it in a convenient spot to be put on the fire; then I commenced to make a bed, which I thought had better be out of the reach of both jumping insects and wild goats. I cut two strong poles and put them into crotches of trees, parallel with each other, about eight feet apart and a little higher than my head. On these I laid a number of smaller poles close together, something like the corduroy

bridges I had seen over swamps. On this floor I laid small branches, and on top of these a quantity of long grass. Laying other poles in the trees about four feet higher and covering them over thickly with leafy branches, I turned this into a sort of aerial bower, which in that warm climate, was preferable to a room in a palace. I cut off the limbs of a small tree, standing close by, at a little distance from the trunk, and these formed the steps of a ladder, by which I could ascend or descend from my bed.

After making a hearty supper of kid and eggs, I built up a good fire, and finding that my smaller earthen vessels were pretty well dried, I placed a number of them in the fire and retired to my bed, just as darkness was beginning to settle on the island, and in a very short time my sore and weary frame was enjoying a greatly-needed repose.

The morning sun was shining when I awoke from a most profound and unbroken sleep. My fire was burned to embers; the flies were humming and buzzing about the remains of my kid, which I had hung from the top of a small tree, in the same way as the Indians hang their deer, and my goat was bleating wildly.

Whether any wild goats had again visited me or not I could not say. My sleep had been of such a character that it would have required something louder than thunder to have awakened me. I was greatly refreshed, although I still felt very sore. A few more days of plenty to eat and nights of unbroken rest, and I would be myself again.

Descending from my bed, I soon had my fire blazing, and my roast kid too near it for the flies to further trouble it. I also found my vessels burnt sufficiently to allow of being used. A few only had broken in the fire, and the others I set up to cool.

Taking one of the cups, I went to the brook and had the first drink of my life from an earthen vessel of my own manufacture. I then took the largest vessel that I had burned, and filling it with water, carried it to my goat. Placing it in her pen, I left her to herself for a time, and when I returned with a bundle of grass that I had gathered for her, I found that she had drank the water. I again filled the dish and returned it to her, and left her while I breakfasted on the same fare as before.

After breakfast I milked the goat, using one of my new dishes to receive the milk. I procured at this milking nearly a quart, which, after cooling, by setting the vessel in the water of the brook for a time, I drank off at one draught.

I felt sure that I would see the Commodore this day; unless, indeed, too glad to get rid of me, he was willing to leave me to myself. But from what I had seen of the three men, I was convinced that not one of them had ever spent a day bushwhacking in his life. They had the appearance and manners of men who had thought work of any kind beneath them; men who, having been born of parents who were possessed of some wealth, thought yachting, racing, dancing, flirting, etc., were the only suitable occupations for them. Now they had come to circumstances where these

things were of no avail, but where mechanical and inventive skill and practical experience were at a premium, and gentlemanly indolence at a discount. Whatever induced such men as these to go to the colonies?

Possibly none of them could have boasted of wealthier parents than I. Not one of the three could have had better social advantages than I had known in my early days, but now that I was in this plight, I was glad of my experience. I could live on the island and provide for myself, whether they could do the same or not; and if they were not prepared to treat me not only as an equal, but with respect, they could not expect to share the fruit of my toil. Once my bruises were healed and my strength regained, I knew that, small as I was in stature compared with the Commodore, he would require to be careful how he undertook to impose on me. He would before long find out the "old man" was no craven. And why should he call me the "old man?" In years I was not older than the Commodore himself. But for the effects, first of my sickness and then of my accident, I was quite his equal in agility; but the epithet was intended to be one of contempt, and so long as they used it toward me they intended it to convey contempt.

Then the ladies—such ladies! Their manner of expression showed some education and refinement; but where was the soul of the true lady? Why did they not expostulate with the Commodore on his cruel treatment of me? Why did they not show their appreciation of my act in saving them? They certainly never would have got to shore, but for my holding the boat;

and through doing so I got crushed against the rocks. Were they so entirely under the influence of the Commodore that they dare not oppose him? The only act of kindness shown by either of them toward me, was when Annie procured for me the second biscuit on the day of landing. Perhaps they, too, looked upon me as a probable burden. Well, they would find that I was not likely to become a burden to anyone.

After breakfast I sat down and indulged in a reverie, something like the foregoing. Arousing myself, I began to clear out all the brush, weeds, etc., from under my bower bed. I then cut poles, and placing one end of them on the ground, leaned them against the bed, until I had them on all sides, leaving only an opening for a door on the side next to the fire. Over these I put an abundance of branches, with large leaves on them, until I made it quite an enclosure, about ten by fifteen feet inside. This done, I took a pole with me and ascended the hill, in the hope of getting a prospect of the island to the west of my camp. Then I would kill a fowl, if possible, and procure some eggs. I observed a swamp a little distance west of my camp, which I decided to explore at once. There was no sign of a sail, so I killed a couple of fowl, gathered as many eggs as I could carry in my coat, and returned to my hut. Milk, eggs, fowl, kid! What more could I want, unless something of a granular and vegetable character?

After cooking and eating my dinner, I started to explore the swamp that I had seen. I found that

around the edge there was a fringe of wild rice growing, which, if our stay was prolonged on the island until it ripened, would prove excellent food. I also found that there were large numbers of frogs in the water. I succeeded in capturing several of the frogs, and cutting off the hind legs put them in my pockets; for although I had never become accustomed to this decidedly French dish, I had learned in my very short experience here, not to despise anything that would both fill the stomach and satisfy the cravings of hunger. I also found a sort of plantain growing plentifully in that region, the leaves of which tasted somewhat like spinach, and I gathered a few leaves of it to test its value as an edible.

Satisfied with the result of my short exploration, I returned to my hut, to find it occupied by the Commodore and Herbert. They had discovered my location shortly after I left for the swamp, and finding the remains of the roasted kid, roasted fowl, eggs, etc., they had helped themselves to their utmost, and were just preparing to leave and carry with them every edible that I possessed, when I returned, in time to receive the Commodore's benediction.

He saluted me something after this fashion: "Well, you old brute, so you skipped out and left us, did you? It matters not to you that we are starving, so that you may roll in plenty. It is nothing to you that Charlie is laid up a cripple, perhaps for life, from that infernal tool of yours; that Mrs. Travers is nearly insane with grief; that Annie is lying on the ground sick with a fever, and that we have not a morsel to eat.

You selfish old fraud, why did we ever allow you to land with us on this island? Why did we not dump you into the sea as we ought to have done? I have a mind to take that infernal tool from your hand and cleave your skull with it. You had better have a care to yourself. Now remember!"

CHAPTER VI.

I brave the Commodore—His cowardice—I send him off—Discoveries in the swamp—My companions come to my tent—Mrs. Travers' plea—I make a compromise—The invalids—My decision—My terms to the Commodore and Herbert.

WHILE the Commodore was giving vent to his wrath I stood still, looking him intently in the eye. When he stopped, I asked, "Are you through?"

"No; by heavens!" he roared. "I will never be through with you until I kill you, you old fraud."

"If you will allow me to say a word, we will perhaps understand each other better," I said, calmly. "I want you to understand that you did not bring me to this island; I am indebted to you for nothing. I am not your servant, and I will take no more of your abuse. I am now almost recovered from my bruises, and can protect myself against any such ungrateful tyrant as you have proved yourself to be, and if it comes to cleaving skulls, you will find that two can play a part in that game; so look out, and in future keep your threats to yourself. I paid my fare on the 'Watchword.' The captain of that sinking ship put me into one of its boats, and put provisions into that boat for me to share, and you usurped authority over

those provisions and refused me my portion. When you foolishly landed in the dangerous place you did, and wrecked the boat, I saved the lives of yourself and friends, at the peril of my own, and suffered a severe crushing against a rock, the effects of which I yet feel. You took advantage of my weak state to beat and abuse me, and rob me of my food and drink. Now I have left you. I owe neither you nor your companions anything. I want to have nothing to do with you or them. I want you to have nothing to do with me; and if ever any of your company are in distress, and need my help, they must ask it as from a stranger whom they had never met before. We are quits! I want you further to understand, that if you ever enter my hut again and eat my food without permission, that you will not live to eat the next meal. Further, I wish you to know that I am an Englishman; that my family is one of the most honorable and honored in the realm; that I am quite your equal socially and in every other respect, and I shall brook no more of your low abuse. Do you hear me?"

Seizing my heavy staff with both hands and lifting it ready to strike, I said, "Now, by the eternal! lay down my food and my goods, and get out of my camp, or I will open the first cemetery on this lonely island before the sun sets."

My anger had grown with my words, and I was on the point of bringing my terrible club down on his head, when Herbert, springing between us and lifting his hand, imploringly cried, "For heaven's sake, gentlemen, don't fight. We cannot afford to quarrel when

we are so much in need of each other's help. Please don't fight; but leave it to me to settle between you."

The Commodore had not expected such a display of spirit on my part. He began to draw back and, laying down the food that he held in his arms, said, "If it were not for the ladies I would never consent to a truce between us, after your most preposterous and impudent harangue."

"Herbert," I said, "let the Commodore leave and return to his camp; you can remain and I will see what I can do with you."

Herbert persuaded the Commodore to leave, which he did. I then told Herbert to sit down and I would prepare something for him to take to the ladies, and if he would return to-morrow and each succeeding day, I would send them something until they recovered their health; but after that they must forage for themselves. I would have nothing whatever to do with the Commodore, and he must give my cabin a wide berth in the future.

I milked my goat and put the milk into one of my new vessels, fried the legs of the frogs, boiled a number of eggs, and gave him one of the roast fowl. Thus loaded, I started him back to his camp.

When he was gone I prepared my fuel for the night, fed my goat and ate my supper. Having boiled some of the plantain, I ate a small quantity of it, and found it very pleasant to the taste. If it proved wholesome it would make a desirable addition to my food supply. I then made up a rousing fire, and my larger vessels being sufficiently sun-dried, I put a number of them

into the fire to burn. It was still twilight when I retired, feeling very weary. I soon fell into a sound sleep, from which I did not awake until the morning.

Upon arising, I first fixed my fire, and finding that my vessels were not sufficiently burned, I replaced them in the fire. I fed and milked my goat, and set the milk to cool. Having found no ill effect from the plantain that I ate the night before, I cooked enough for my breakfast to nearly serve a whole meal and found it very pleasant eating, particularly so as I had been so long without any cooked vegetable food. After fitting up my camp and leaving everything in order, I started for the swamp. I succeeded in capturing several frogs and gathered a quantity of plantain. In ascending from the swamp, I saw a bush that I had noticed on my previous visit, but had not tasted. I tasted the leaves, and found it very like green tea, but more bitter. Knowing that the tea-plant had been found growing wild in India I thought I would try it, in the hope that it would prove a refreshing beverage. I plucked enough leaves to fill one of my pockets, and on returning to camp, spread them on a warm stone in front of the fire to dry. I then steeped a few of the leaves and drank the liquid, which was not unpleasant, and I concluded that a taste for it could easily be cultivated.

I then began to prepare my dinner, which was to consist of roast fowl, fried frog's legs and boiled plantain, and possibly a cup of tea. I had scarcely commenced when, hearing voices, I looked up, when to my astonishment and chagrin, there was Mrs. Travers

coming at a creeping gait, indicating great feebleness. Close behind her was Herbert, with his arm around Annie, and her head hanging on his shoulder. She was pale and evidently very sick. Charlie followed close behind these, traveling with two sticks—one in each hand—and taking alternate steps with the sticks and his sound foot, while holding the wounded foot from the ground. The Commodore was following slowly at some distance behind Charlie, and apparently did not intend to come near my hut until peace was made between us, as he sat down on a small tree at some distance away.

Mrs. Travers leading the van was the first to speak, and addressing me, she said, "Well, uncle, we have come to ask you to help us in our great dilemma." This was the first time that any one of them had called me by any other name than "old man" since we first met.

Looking the chagrin that I felt, I did not reply for some seconds. She halted, and with a look of almost despair, said, "Won't you let us come?" My heart was touched with pity, seeing their plight, but it was hard to altogether overlook their treatment of me. I replied, "The sick and lame may come, until they are better; the others must take care of themselves." "Thank you ever so much," she said, as she came forward and entered the hut, and was followed by Annie and Charlie.

At one end of the hut I had driven four stakes into the ground, two at either side; across each of these pairs of stakes were laid cross pieces, and on these

again, beside each other, the two halves of a split log, with the flat sides up. This bench was about eight feet long and the right height for a seat. The three invalids sat down upon it, while Herbert stood looking as if he did not know what to do. Presently Mrs. Travers said, "Herbert must be allowed to stay to help take care of us, and as the Commodore had charge of us from my niece's father, he, too, must be allowed to remain."

I replied, "You have come to my hut in distress, and I have welcomed you because of your distress, but I must be allowed to dictate who shall receive my hospitality. If you can accept it on my terms, you are welcome to it; if not, then you must retire. For the Commodore, I will not allow him to enter my hut, and if he ever does so without my knowledge, you will receive no more hospitality from me. Let him know that these are the conditions upon which I will take care of you, until you regain your health. Then, of course, you will return to him and we part. Herbert, who has not treated me kindly, but not so brutally as the Commodore, may sleep in one end of this hut, and cook his victuals at my fire; but he must provide his own fare. I will not work for and feed those who are as able to work as I am."

Herbert asked me where he would go to procure food. I replied, "Go to the hill for eggs or fowl; or go to the swamp and kill some frogs and gather some plantain. You are stronger than I am and I will not feed you."

Herbert went back to the Commodore, and after

holding a conversation with him for some time, they strolled away together in the direction of the swamp. I then continued the preparation of dinner, but increased the quantities. I soon brought a cup of new milk, just drawn from the goat, to Annie, which she drank greedily. I also gave her a little tea, and as she felt very sick and faint I helped her up to my bed, where she was soon asleep. I then gave Mrs. Travers and Charlie their dinner and took my own. Mrs. Travers then climbed up beside Annie, and was soon asleep.

Charlie's wound was so painful that he could not rest; so I examined it and found it greatly inflamed, with a purplish hue extending for some distance in every direction. I got some clay, and moistening it with water, put a poultice on the wound, and placing him on the bench in a reclining position, I put a vessel with water near him, and instructed him to keep it well wet, which he did; later in the afternoon he was able to get a little sleep.

Here, now, was a pretty plight to be in. Three invalids on my hands, and two haughty, worthless creatures, with frightfully big appetites, trying to thrust themselves on to me, and standing ready to gormandize my food the moment they found my back turned.

I sat down for a time to think it out. A plan presently presented itself, but it would require a few days to perfect it, during which time I must endure my inconveniences as best I could.

I decided that I would go to a short distance from

my camp, on a little higher ground, where there was an abundance of fallen trees, and I would there build a small house, with two compartments below and a chamber above. The one compartment would make a general living room, and the other a bedroom for the men, and the women could sleep in the chamber. Then I would fit up my hut for myself alone. Now this was no small task, with food to get and prepare, and how to do it was a conundrum.

The men, including the Commodore, were almost useless and could do but very little; so I would have to take control of the whole party and direct their work. Instead of being the servant, I should have to be the master, and if they would not submit to this I would leave them and make my home on some other part of the island.

Having made this resolution I set to work, and after fixing up a good fire so as to finish the burning of my vessels, I went to procure more clay to make others; for with my increased household I would need many more than I had yet made. Between carrying water, loosening the clay and working it into a mass suitable for moulding, and then forming it into vessels, cups, plates, pitchers, pans, etc., I worked between three and four hours, as rapidly as my strength would allow, before I could say that I had nearly enough made for our present use; especially as I knew that a number of them would break in the burning.

After placing my ware in rows in the sun to dry, preparatory to being put into the fire to burn, I

returned to the hut, washed myself in the brook and began to prepare for supper. Neither Herbert nor the Commodore had yet made their appearance at camp. This annoyed me greatly; for I felt sure that they were loitering around and leaving me to provide for those who were their charges.

Finding all my invalids awake I put some water on the fire to boil, and soon gave the two women each a cup of tea. I then climbed the hill and secured some eggs and a fowl. I soon had the fowl roasting, took the new milk of the goat and some eggs and made a custard, poached some eggs, and making another cup of tea, gave the women their supper. Mrs. Travers ate quite heartily, but Annie was unable to take anything but a cup of tea. I boiled eggs for Charlie's supper and mine, and with these and some cold fowl and a cup of tea we made our meal.

I had got all my chores done and fuel gathered for the night; Charlie's wound was dressed with a fresh poultice, and I was nearly ready to retire, when Herbert and the Commodore came into view walking leisurely from the direction of the swamp. They had secured a few frogs and brought the legs, which they cooked on the flat stone which I used for frying, on the further side of my fire from the camp.

Herbert came into the hut to see Charlie, and to inquire after the health of the women. Feeling indignant at the way they had acted, I inquired, in no pleasant mood, where he had been all the afternoon.

"Oh," he said, "the Commodore and I went for

a little exploration, and have been discussing the situation."

"Well, what conclusion have you arrived at?"

"Oh! as to that, we don't know what to do."

Looking at him very angrily, I said, "Would you like me to tell you what I think you had better do?"

"Most certainly; I would be glad of your advice," he said, in a sarcastic tone.

Without appearing to notice the sarcasm, I said, "Well, then, I will give it. There are six mouths to feed on this island, and you may as well make up your mind that you will have to obtain as much food each day as will feed two of these mouths. A flag of distress wants to be planted on that hill, and at least two visits a day will have to be made to look out for a sail. A house has to be built, capable of accommodating the whole of this company, and sufficiently comfortable to protect us during the rainy season. Earthen vessels of different kinds, sufficient to meet our wants have to be made, and a furnace must be built in which to burn them. A furnace fit for doing our cooking and sufficiently large to keep a perpetual fire in has to be built. Fuel to keep up that fire must be got every day, and that fire kept up, for you know that if the fire goes out we have not the means of starting it again. A sufficient number of goats—giving milk—to supply us with milk, butter and cheese, has to be captured, and these goats must be fed, watered and milked every day. Our clothing, which has received such rough usage, will have to be renewed, either from

skins from kids, or from cloth to be made from some material yet to be discovered. A thousand things will be required, that I have not named and that I cannot anticipate. Now who is to do all this? Do you think I will do it? If so, you are greatly mistaken. I will do my share and no more. I will do such things as you cannot do, and you must do the rest. I will do this only on condition that you do what you can do. I can provide for myself without any help from the rest of you. Can you provide for yourselves without me? I fear not. Now hear what I propose. I will direct all your work, and you and all your friends will do as I direct, in helping to provide for the camp. If you all consent to this, I will begin at once to set you your task; if you object, I will strike camp and go to some other part of the island, leaving you and your company here to look after yourselves. I will do as you say, but you must choose now. An immediate understanding is necessary. Which will you do?"

While I had been delivering myself in this strain, Herbert stood looking into the fire, not answering a word. The two ladies had sat up in bed, and were both intently looking at us. The Commodore was busy frying his frogs, and gave no sign of having heard a word that was being said. Mrs. Travers was the first to break the silence. She said, "Oh, yes; of course, Herbert, you will do as he directs?" Herbert replied, "Oh, then; as to that, I suppose there is no help for it."

The Commodore and Herbert ate their frogs; I cut

some leafy branches and placing some in each end of the hut, I lay down in one end and Herbert in the other. The Commodore made his bed under a tree at a little distance on the opposite side of the fire, and we all slept quietly until morning. Thus passed our first night in company on the island.

CHAPTER VII.

I set Herbert to work—My household duties—The Commodore “looks for a sail”—We build a furnace—My invalids—We wish a change of diet—Charlie’s “ifs”—Kid-hunting—Amateur pottery.

THE next morning, upon waking, I inquired after my invalids. Mrs. Travers was better, Annie was worse, and the symptoms were decidedly feverish. Charlie’s wound was much better, but still painful.

I roused Herbert up and set him to carrying fuel. I took my vessels out of the embers and set those that were not broken to cool, and built up a rousing fire. I then sent Herbert to gather some plantain, as our systems required something of a vegetable nature, and while he was gone I put two vessels with water on the coals to boil, one for tea and the other for the plantain. I then milked the goat and set the milk to cool. I dressed Charlie’s wound and fixed him in a reclining position, as I had done the day before, and gave him water to keep it wet. I then made tea for the ladies, and put milk into it. I made a custard with eggs and milk for Annie; but her appetite was such that she could not eat. She drank copiously, however, of the tea, and I kept this made in readiness for her all the while, and placed where she could reach

and take it whenever she wished. I gave Herbert and Charlie their breakfast, but absolutely refused to give the Commodore anything. He was about to raise a quarrel, when both Herbert and Mrs. Travers entreated him, for Annie's sake, not to make a noise. He finally went up the hill and gathered some eggs, and cooked them in the hot ashes and ate them, and then sat down at a little distance under the shade of a small tree.

It took me nearly half the forenoon to perform what I might call my household duties. Herbert had carried enough fuel for the day, gathered the plantain, and—almost under protest, saying he was not a feeder of swine—fed and watered the goat. Except this I had no assistance.

Being now ready to begin my day's work, I said to Herbert, "A furnace of some kind must be built in which to burn our pottery, and you must help me by bringing the stones. The Commodore had better go up to the hill-top and look out for a sail, and then make a circuit of the shore of the entire island. It may be that some of the other boats from the 'Watchword' have reached the land, and its occupants are in as bad a plight as we are; or he may discover the remains of some wreck or floatwood of some kind, that may bring us useful tools or material; or he may find some kind of food, or be able to capture a kid. There is very much to do that must be done; for the probabilities are that we may have to remain on this island for many days and perhaps years. It will be wise for us to act as if we were certain of a prolonged

stay; then if we get off, there will be nothing lost; but if we have to remain, we will be prepared for it."

It was with a very bad grace that Herbert helped me to do the "menial work", as he called it, and his groaning and complaining with the little he did, made it, to me, almost worse than no help.

The Commodore climbed to the top of the hill, taking with him a bush, which he planted by putting stones against it, and in its shade he spent the rest of the forenoon "looking for a sail." Returning about noon, he brought some eggs, on which, with some plantain that Herbert gave him, he made his dinner. He then started for a stroll and did not return until evening.

Herbert and I worked at building a rude furnace. Herbert brought the stones and I mixed mortar of clay, and laid the stones with a wooden trowel, and when evening came, we had not more than half finished a job that Herbert declared to be the beastliest work he ever undertook.

Annie was still very sick. She could eat comparatively nothing; but as her thirst was very great, she could drink the tea and milk, and this kept her up very well. Mrs. Travers was better, but very nervous and weak. The excitement she had passed through, the privations she had had to endure, and the anguish which her circumstances caused her, combined to almost overcome her, and she wept silently most of the time. Charlie's wound, under the clay poultice, was looking quite healthy, and I felt satisfaction at the results of my rude doctoring.

We got our supper, and when we were through we had very little food left in the hut. After fixing our camp for the night we sat down to discuss matters.

I suggested that we had better try to capture a kid. The fowl was not as pleasant to the taste as we could desire, and was rather tough, and we were growing tired of it. Many of the eggs were found stale, and as this was doubtless a second laying they would soon be gone. While our appetites were keen—as appetites always are after several days of starving—we did not much mind these things; but now being almost surfeited, we began to be more fastidious in our taste. A good young kid would be a pleasant bit of meat; or if it were possible to capture a fish it would make an agreeable change. How to do this was a question that Herbert's ingenuity did very little to solve. Charlie's suggestions were all surrounded with so many "ifs" that they were worthless. "If we had a boat," or "if we had a seine," "or if we had hook and line," or "if we had gun and ammunition."

I replied, "Yes, if we had press, type and material, we could start a newspaper." They all laughed a little—there was not much laughter in our camp—and Charlie saw the worthlessness of his suggestions.

I said that as the goats seemed to herd mostly to the west end of the island, I thought we would find fertile land there and plenty of grass, and that if we could go amongst them at night and build a fire, we might capture one or two as I had done; or we might build a trap or a dead fall; but until we could thoroughly explore the island it would be impossible to go

by night to do this. As we must get our earthen vessels burning, I could not go on an exploring expedition until the fire was started under them, and we would have to postpone that trip for a couple of days. I told them I had noticed tracks in the vicinity of the goat's pen; which I presumed were made by goats visiting our captive by night, in answer to her bleats. I suggested that possibly they still visited her, as she often bleated a great deal in the night, and perhaps it would pay Herbert and me to lie in ambush for a few hours, with good strong sticks, and if they came we might capture one by attacking it.

Herbert said he would not take the world and go out at night alone near that pen; that some wild beast might attack him. I showed him that it was impossible there could be any wild beasts on that island; because if there were, the goats would have been killed, and there would have been none of them left. However, I could not dispel his fears. I thought I now saw the reason why neither he nor the Commodore would go on a prospecting tour. "Well," said I, "I will go." I got a good heavy stick, about four feet long, and taking the skin of the kid with me, I went to some distance beyond the goat's pen on the side next to the swamp, and sat down on a fallen tree to see if any goats came.

Our goat, which had been bleating for some time before I set out, now took a turn at being still, and I waited a long time—I should think nearly an hour—before I heard a sound. How still was that island! not a sound of a living thing, except the occasional

croak of a frog. At last I heard a faint bleat of a kid, somewhere a little to the north side of the swamp. This was repeated several times, when our goat answered it, and then commenced a vigorous bleating which she kept up for some time. An occasional answer would come to her, but no goats drew near. I then started further on in the direction of the noises I had heard, and at last reached within a short distance of where the goats were. Getting down amongst some low bushes, on my hands and knees, and throwing the skin of the kid over my head and shoulders, I started a vigorous bleating in imitation of a kid. I soon heard the goats coming in my direction and answering me by low bleats. They came on unsuspiciously and soon began to surround me, sniffing as if they smelt that all was not quite right. They did not appear to be at all afraid—having no enemies on the island they seemed almost devoid of fear—but sniffed around me. I held my stick upright, posing over my shoulder and ready at any instant to strike a blow. I waited until just such a kid as I wanted came near, when I struck it a heavy blow on the back of its neck. It fell stunned, to the ground. I took out my knife and bled it instantly. The other goats stampeded to some distance and turned to look again. They seemed aware that something out of the usual had happened, but could not understand it. I waited until the blood ceased to flow, when I took the kid up and returned to the camp.

On reaching the camp I found them all asleep; so without waking them I proceeded to skin and dress

the kid and hang it before the fire to roast. I then renewed the fire and lay down and slept soundly until morning.

On rising, I waked Herbert and sent him to gather plantain for breakfast, and while he was gone I milked my goat, and boiled water as before and got things started for breakfast. The kid was roasted fairly well on the side next to the fire, and it was greatly relished by all except Annie, who was still too miserable to eat solid food; but a good drink of tea and another of fresh milk fully satisfied her. The Commodore looked very covetously at our roast kid, and I told Herbert he might give him the liver to fry on the flat stone, and some plantain to eat with it. This the Commodore seemed to relish, and when eaten he went again to the top of the hill, where he spent most of the forenoon.

Herbert and I went to work again at our furnace, stopping only to prepare and eat dinner. Before night we completed it and put our ware—which was now sufficiently dried—into it, and started the fire that was to burn it. Our supper consisted of plantain, kid, eggs and tea. The tea was not as pleasant to the taste as the cultivated tea that we had been accustomed to in civilization, and none of them seemed to care for it as a beverage; but I rather liked it, and thought I would cultivate a taste for it. Annie seemed to relish it as a drink when she had no appetite. This evening Annie ate a poached egg and seemed somewhat better, her fever symptoms having greatly abated.

We were now ready for bed again. But one of us must remain awake to keep the fire burning under our ware; for if the fire should go out and the ware cool before it was fully burned, I knew it would be spoiled. Herbert objected to stay up and go every hour or so to the furnace to renew the fire; but I reminded him that I had been up more than half the night before procuring and preparing the kid, and that I wanted to explore the island the next day, while he would have nothing to do but to attend to the fire in the furnace. So with a very bad grace he at last consented to do it, and I lay down and had another sound sleep until morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

I explore the island—The cove—The pastures—Signs of habitation—The ruined hut—The lonely grave—My meditations—I return to the camp—Trouble with the Commodore—I leave the camp.

BREAKFAST was over and all my chores and household work attended to, and I was ready to start on my tour by a little after eight o'clock. I arranged that Herbert should lie down and sleep, and Charlie should wake him every two or three hours, for the purpose of renewing the furnace fire. I also directed that the Commodore should not be allowed to enter the hut during my absence.

I put some hard-boiled eggs and a piece of roast kid in my pocket for a lunch, and taking my axe and a heavy stick I started on my tour of exploration. Leaving the camp in a northwesterly course until I reached the seashore, about three-fourths of a mile from camp, I followed the shore westward to the northwest end of the island; then southward and eastward until I came opposite the camp, when I returned to the hut.

A little westward of where I reached the shore I found a gully, which served as a drain to the swamp that I have before described. A little stream of clear water ran through this and emptied into the sea. At

the mouth of this stream was a cove of about twenty rods in depth, widening from a few feet at the stream to about ten rods at its mouth. The bottom of this cove was a sandy beach, covered at high tide, but bare when the tide was out. I soon saw a means of making a trap for catching fish here. By driving a row of stakes across the cove, into this sand about half way up from its mouth, and throwing some brush and logs on the inside of these, the sea would soon form a bar of sand across in that place, leaving a depression on the inside, in which water would stand when the sea was out. When the tide was in, the fish would come up this cove in search of the food that the little brook from the swamp might carry out, and the tide going out would leave some of them inside the bar. It would then be an easy matter to wade into this little pond and capture them, by stunning them with poles, or chasing them upon the sand. Having settled this as something to be done in the near future, with a wish that the Commodore had chosen it for a landing place, I started on.

Between this and the west end of the island, the land gradually fell, until it was not more than twenty feet above the sea. The shores, too, were not so precipitous, and a sandy beach extended all the way around the northwest part of the island, and well to the southwest angle. The land was fertile and a good growth of small trees, shrubs, flowers, grass, etc., covered it. I found two kinds of berries, one a rasp and the other blue. The traces of goats were very plentiful, and I saw many of them moving about or lying

leisurely in the shade. They did not appear to be at all afraid of me, but looked at me with evident curiosity. I did not disturb them, for I did not wish to excite their fear. Here they were, hundreds of them, revelling in an exceedingly rich pasture, fat, sleek and happy, knowing no enemy and without either fear or anxiety. What a pity that it was necessary for us to bring death and imprisonment to them, that we might live. We would gladly have sailed away and left them to their life of comfort and peace, had an opportunity presented itself.

Turning southward along the west coast of the island, I made a most interesting discovery. We were not the first human beings to inhabit this lonely island. The shore in one spot presented an appearance of having been used for some purpose; but in what that appearance consisted I could not tell for the life of me. I can only say that in some way it looked different from the rest of the shore. Something like the overgrown yard of an uninhabited house. At any rate, something made me feel that I was on ground not altogether virgin, and I began to explore it carefully, expecting to find human traces.

Going back a few rods amongst the bushes, I came upon the remains of an old log hut, fallen or blown down, decayed and overgrown. It may have been twenty years since it was inhabited, or it may have been fifty. I stood and looked at it, and wondered as to its history and its inhabitants. A strange feeling crept over me, and I found the spot more lonely than localities where there were no such traces.

Feeling hungry, I sat down on some of the fallen logs of the old hut and ate my lunch; after which, I set to work to make a thorough investigation, in the hope of finding some tool or implement that would prove useful to us; or perhaps something that would tell a tale of the past life that had lived on the island. I tore the hut to pieces and searched everywhere, under and about it, but I found nothing, except a piece of iron bar about two feet long and an inch and a quarter square; this I took with me. I then searched the grounds for some distance around, but found nothing that I could use; but I did find something that told a tale. A few rods to the south of the old hut was a little mound of earth about six feet long by two wide, and at one end, lying rotting on the ground, was a small wooden cross. Here in this beautiful spot, near the sounding sea, away from home and civilization, some poor Christian had lain down and died, to be forgotten, alone on this little island. How sad I felt! The fate that likely awaited me; but would I find kind hands to make a grave and raise a cross? Not likely. I took up the cross, and making a hole in the ground with the iron bar, I again planted it over the grave, and determined at some future day to erect a more substantial monument on the grave to the unknown dead.

From the traces on the shore, I concluded that a ship had been driven ashore at this spot. Some or all of its crew had been saved, and the ship going to pieces, they had constructed this hut and had occupied it while they were constructing out of the wreckage a

boat to put to sea in, or until they were taken off by a passing ship. As they took all their tools and utensils with them, they probably went to sea in a boat of their own building. Did they ever reach their homes and tell their story? If so, there may be some yet living who will remember it and recognize the location, should this ever reach their eye.

I had often wondered how those goats came to be on this island; it was now explained. When that ship was wrecked there were goats on board of her. These goats got to shore, and when the shipwrecked crew left the island in their small boat, they had no room for the goats and left them behind. These had multiplied into the hundreds that, up to our arrival, had held undisputed possession.

While on the island, one of those wrecked mariners had sickened and died; or he may have been drowned in attempting to land, and his body, washed up by the waves, was recovered, and kind hands made for it a friendly grave and raised a frail monument. The cross had the appearance of having been made from a piece of deck planking.

Finding no further traces that would lead to our advantage, I took the iron bar with me and continued my journey. As I approached the south shore I found the ground gradually growing higher and less fertile. I also found that the sandy beach disappeared, the rocks extending almost perpendicularly into the sea. I followed the south shore at some distance in from the sea, until opposite to our camp, and turned and made straight for it, reaching it about three o'clock.

I had now ascertained the character of the entire island. There was a depression in the middle of the west part, which formed the swamp, of from twenty to thirty acres. Numerous little springs in the banks—one of the largest being the one beside which we were camped—flowed into this swamp, and then all together flowed into the sea through the gully and cove that I have described. A great portion of the basin of this swamp and the northwest decline from the ridge to the sea were fertile, and afforded food for the goats, which I decided must form our chief food supply. Amongst the growth on this fertile tract must be found all our other supplies; but upon the extent of that material our comfort in a great measure depended, should our stay on the island prove a protracted one.

My companions had evidently not expected me back so soon. Mrs. Travers had come down from her bed, and the whole company, except Annie, were gathered in the hut engaged in animated conversation. The Commodore, in their midst, was engaged in laying down the law to them. They did not hear me until I threw down the bar and stick on the ground, just outside the hut. They all sprang up and Mrs. Travers came out hurriedly, followed by the Commodore and Herbert. Standing and looking at the Commodore I said to him, "I thought I forbade you to enter my hut." He merely replied, "What have you to say about it!" Quicker than thought I struck him just below the ear, and he fell with a heavy thud to the ground, but soon gathered himself together and rose to his feet again. Herbert sprang toward me in a menacing way, and

I struck out at him, hitting him on the nose and causing the blood to flow freely, and nearly sending him to the ground. He stumbled away several feet before he regained his upright position. The Commodore having regained his feet made a rush for me; but stepping slightly to one side, I evaded his blow and hit him on the cheek, cutting it considerably, following quickly with a right hander under the ear, which felled him to the ground. This time he did not attempt to rise for some moments, and when he did so he made his way to the brook, to wash himself. Herbert had previously gone to the brook for the same purpose. Mrs. Travers had gone back into the hut when the row began, and turning, had seen the blood on Herbert's face and had fainted. Charlie, standing on one foot, was trying to do something for her, but succeeded in doing nothing. I snatched up a vessel and brought some cool water and threw a little in her face, and she soon revived. Annie was groaning and crying as she lay in the bed, and there was general confusion.

After Mrs. Travers had recovered from her faint and had regained her composure, I asked her if she had forgotten the conditions upon which I had received her and her niece into my hut, and nursed and provided for them? She replied to the effect that the Commodore was their friend and protector, and she could not be so unkind to him as to forbid him to come to them. She thought it most unreasonable and unkind of me to keep him away and require him to sleep out of doors while the rest of us were housed.

I asked her if she remembered how the Commodore had treated me in the boat; how he had beaten and ill-treated and robbed me of my food and drink, after we had landed on the island. I asked her if she expected me to turn now and give shelter and food to him, in return for his treatment of me. I presumed she was right in saying he was her friend, and I would not linger to dispute his being her protector; but I would give him the opportunity to prove it. I built this hut; it was now theirs to do with as they liked. I had made a lot of ware; with the exception of a few pieces, it was theirs. They had a fair start; they were welcome to all I had done for them. I would bid them farewell. I did not want any of them to ever come near me again.

I went out, took up my axe, iron bar and kid skins, a cup and two larger dishes and a couple of brands from the fire and left the camp. Annie burst out weeping and said, as I passed out, "Oh, please don't go," while Mrs. Travers followed me, saying, "Please don't go and we will arrange things all right." I paid no heed to them; in fact, I would not have dared to stay where Herbert and the Commodore could have attacked me in my sleep.

CHAPTER IX.

My new camp—My hut—The goat run—The goat-pen—A double capture—New pottery—My furnace—Comfortably housed at last.

I WALKED in nearly the same direction that I did in the morning; but keeping slightly more to the left. I crossed the gully that emptied the swamp into the sea, and followed up a small cross gully that emptied its tiny stream into the larger one, for some distance, where I found a convenient place to camp, about a mile distant from the old hut. There was a fair supply of dry trees lying on the ground, and in less than ten minutes after reaching the spot I had kindled a fire from my brands. The place where I located was below a perpendicular ridge of rock about three feet high, running along the north side of the gully, an average of about twenty feet distance from the little stream. It was in a sort of notch in this ridge that I built my fire; a place something like two sides of a triangle, and most convenient to build a furnace in for cooking. There was plenty of room either to the west or east of my fire for a hut, and the tiny rivulet would run just to the south, supplying me with plenty of good water.

It was now about five o'clock, and I had a large amount of work to do. So I took a flat stone and put

it into the fire to be ready to fry frogs' legs. I had yet, however, to capture the frogs; but as I was no farther from the north side of the swamp than I had before been from the east end of it, I had no fear of success. I started on my hunt, and crossing over directly southward, soon came to the swamp and was not long in killing enough frogs to make both supper and breakfast. I also gathered a quantity of plantain and tea. I was again at my camp before six o'clock, and when I had finished my supper I had still over two hours in which to work, before darkness set in.

During this interval I worked with a will. I first cut two poles about fourteen feet long, and at a height of about ten feet from the ground, put their ends into crotches of trees about ten feet apart, at a distance of about twelve feet from the ridge, against which I had built my fire. I laid the other ends on the ridge, and putting some stones under them raised them up a foot or so higher than the ridge. I then cut several poles and laid them across these, and on top of these laid a large quantity of leafy branches, and this made a roof like a shanty with its lowest side on the ridge. I then ran two poles, about three feet apart on a level with the ridge upon a cross pole, put into the crotches of other trees, and put small cross poles on these, then branches and then grass. These made a bed about four feet high, as the ground declined a little from the ridge to the stream. Cutting small, leafy trees, I stood them on the ground all around the sides of the roof and leaned them against it until I had enclosed it

as thickly as I did my old hut, leaving an opening for a door next to the fire.

The daylight was about spent, and I stirred up the fire, added fuel to it and prepared to go out to capture a kid. Being much nearer the pasture ground of the goats, I thought some of them would be sure to be attracted to the fire, and I was right. They soon came around; some of them as curious as before. Passing out of the door and going around the hut away from the fire and getting on to the ridge a little distance away, I came upon them from behind. Being so intent in looking at the fire they paid no heed to me; indeed, if I touched them those in front of me did not notice that it was not another goat pressing forward. I caught a good-sized kid in my arms, and holding its mouth shut with my hand to prevent its bleating, I hurried back the way I came and bled it with my knife, as soon as I got again below the ridge. So quickly and quietly did I do this, that it created almost no commotion amongst the goats. This was possible, because having no foes to attack or injure them, they did not understand what it meant. I skinned and cleaned the kid and hung it in a tree to cool until morning, fixed up my fire and retired to bed.

This was the first night that I had slept on a comfortable bed since giving up my other one to the sick ladies, and I made good use of it, sleeping soundly until morning.

The next morning, upon rising, I fried the remainder of the frogs' legs and a part of the pluck of the kid, boiled some plantain, made some tea, and had a very

comfortable breakfast. I set to work and cut a large number of poles and built a close, strong pen about twenty feet square, against the little ridge of rock, extending over the little rivulet. I built it about eight feet high and drew the top poles in a little, so that a goat could not get out over it. Then I cut some small poles and laid them across the corners of the pen and on these I put a quantity of stones, so as to give weight to it and make it solid. It required more than half a day to complete this; but my intention was to make a pen into which I could put several goats, and in which they would have plenty of room; then with company and with living water running through their pen, they would not be so unhappy as my other goat appeared to be.

When I had finished the pen I went to the swamp for a supply of plantain and tea, and after returning, set out to find clay suitable for crockery. This I found a difficult task, the soil hereabouts being richer; there was a greater deposit on top of it, and I failed to find any. As evening drew on I returned to camp. I prepared a quantity of fine dry wood, and as soon as it was dark I made up a rousing fire. This soon brought the goats about in large numbers, and after they began to move well forward, I slipped around the pen and came upon them from the rear. It was not easy for me to ascertain which of them were giving suck, but I fortunately succeeded in capturing two very good ones. Picking one of them up so that it could not get its feet to the ground, I ran to the pen on top of the ridge of rock and dropped it in, then

returned for another one, carrying it in the same way. The bleating of the captured goats was so loud and distressing, that the flock, in apparent alarm, drew off to too great a distance for me to secure any more.

I went to bed and slept soundly, in spite of the incessant bleating of the goats. The next morning I went into the pen and spent an hour trying to make friends with them, and succeeded in considerably allaying their fears of me. Then I brought them a quantity of grass, which they ate. I started out again to find clay, and this time succeeded in procuring it near the swamp. The distance made it a heavy task to carry, and I found it necessary to make some vessel to carry it in; so going to the margin of the swamp, I cut some long, slim bushes that grew there, something like willows, and returning with them to camp, I commenced to weave a basket. Not being an adept at this work, it took me until evening to get it finished. When done it was a strong, clumsy, rough affair, that would hold something more than half a bushel.

I milked both of my goats and had all the milk that I could use; but for company's sake, and to be sure of a supply when they should fail in their milk, as they were sure to do as the season changed, I captured another goat before retiring for the night.

Having grown tired of roast, I fried most of the kid this time. The way I fried my food was to take a thin stone, put it into the fire until it was red hot, or nearly so, then placing it near the fire by lifting it with the ends of two short poles, I put my meat on it and

the heat of the stone was sufficient to thoroughly cook the meat. By laying the stone at an angle of about twenty degrees, with a corner at the lowest point, the fat would run off and drop from the corner into a vessel. In this way I could fry a quantity at a time, and packing it into a dish, I could get enough fat to cover it over; which would, when cold, make a solid mass, and protect the meat from decay for many weeks. When I wanted to use any of it I had simply to dig it out of the fat and warm it on the stone, only partially heated. In my opinion, meat fried on a hot stone as I have described, is sweeter than that done on any other plan. It might be worth a trial, even in civilization.

The next morning, after feeding my goats and milking them, and eating my breakfast, I commenced to carry clay for making pottery, and worked at it nearly all day. It took a long time to loosen it with the sharpened end of my iron bar, and I could only carry a small quantity at a time, because of its weight and the distance. Then I required a considerable quantity, for I had not only to make such dishes as I might need, but also enough to allow for those that would break in the burning. Besides, I required enough clay to plaster over the inside of the furnace in which I would burn them.

The list that I thought would be required, allowing for breakages, was something like this: Six large crocks, holding from ten to twelve quarts; six small crocks, holding from five to six quarts; three large pans, holding about twenty quarts, for keeping water

in at the fire continually; twelve pans, holding about ten quarts, for keeping milk in; six large pitchers, six small pitchers; three large jugs, three small jugs; twelve large, very deep plates, twelve large shallow plates, twelve small plates; twelve cups, twelve saucers.

This made a quantity of ware; but I allowed that half of it would break in burning, and when I considered how many I would require for milk, cheese, etc., I thought it better to make the number I have named.

Beginning with the larger vessels, I spent two whole days before I got them all made. Not having a wheel to form them on, they were very irregular in shape; but answered my purpose well. The thing that I most wanted was a glaze for the inside; but this I could not make, and had to be contented with them unglazed, which would necessitate their being thrown away after being used for some time.

My next work was to build a furnace of stones a little way from my hut on the opposite side of the rivulet. Having plastered the inside and filled the interstices with clay, I placed my ware within it and started my fire. For three days and nights I did little else but attend to my goats and the furnace, and prepare and eat my food, catching snatches of sleep, either by day or night, while the fire was burning brightly. At the end of this time I let my fire out, and as soon as it was cool I opened the furnace. I did not find the burning as successful as I had hoped. A large number were cracked, some were burned too much and others too little; but I found enough whole to answer my present wants very well.

Next I started in to turn my niche in the ridge of rock into a furnace for cooking. I took some loose flat stones and made jambs and plastered them over on the inside with clay. Then I laid narrow flat stones across the top, left spaces between on which to set my vessels for heating, and fitted a large flat stone to the front, to close up the fire and keep it from dying out. I now turned my attention to the chimney, which I built of stones, plastering the inside with clay, to about eight feet high. I had as good and convenient a kitchen range as most housewives can boast.

Equipped with range, convenient dishes, a comfortable hut, good bed, three milch goats, and a swamp producing rice, plantain and frogs, a run of goats just at hand, and tea growing within a few rods, my prospects were not so bad. I only wanted bread—which want the rice, when ripe, would partly supply—to complete a very comfortable diet.

My goats, through constant petting and caressing, had grown quite tame, and I felt I could soon turn them loose without fear of losing them.

One thing I wished for was the hill, from which to keep a look-out for a sail. I knew, however, by the smoke of the old camp fire, that the Commodore and his companions were still on the island. Would they send for me if they hailed a ship?

It was now over two weeks since I had left my former camp, and I had not heard or seen any one of my companions. As I could see the smoke from their camp I concluded they could see mine, and had they wanted to find me, they would have had no difficulty in

doing so. But the Commodore must have felt greatly humiliated over the result of our bout. He was a large, powerfully-built man, and I was only medium sized; but my years of experience at the diggings and on sheep runs gave me an advantage in little affairs of that kind. Then by striking him so suddenly, when he did not expect it, I secured an advantage, the value of which I fully understood. The Commodore had been thoroughly beaten, and judging his disposition by men of his stamp that I had met in my travels, I felt certain that he would rather starve than humiliate himself by asking aid from me. So I did not wonder that he did not allow any communication with me. I had, however, a great curiosity to know how they were getting along for supplies. I felt sure that their eggs had given out by this time, and I had not heard anything that indicated that they were capturing kids. The fact is, I knew that they could not provide for themselves, and I felt anxious about the helpless ones of the party.

CHAPTER X.

My fish-trap—Charlie's visit—A dismal story—I refuse to return—Supplies for the suffering—The cnlprits send to beg my pardon.

I NOW determined to make my fish-trap, and as this would necessitate my going to and from the sea, I decided to kill two birds with one stone, and by carrying salt water back with me in one of my jugs, procure salt by evaporating the sea water over the fire, and thus be able to season my food; for I had not yet become so accustomed to unsalted food as to relish it. I took my axe and went to the nearest point to the little cove, where I could find suitable timber out of which to make stakes. I cut nearly one hundred stakes about four feet long, sharpened one end of each and then carried them to the bank. I also cut a number of poles, from four to six inches at the large end. These, with brush for withes, limbs, etc., I carried and laid with the stakes. This kept me nearly two days. Next morning about ten o'clock the tide would be out sufficiently to allow me to commence work.

In the morning after breakfast, I took a log of wood, the largest and straightest that I could find, and cutting off a piece about four feet long, I split off two sides, leaving a flat piece about two inches thick in

the middle. This I took, and with my axe formed into a shovel, with the blade and handle solid. I then cut another log about the same length, about six inches through, and cutting away the outside all around, reduced it to the size of a handle, except about one foot at one end, which I left the original size. This I called my "maul." With my axe, shovel and maul, I started for the cove. The tide was going out, and I soon threw my stakes, poles and brush, down to the sand. When I got down I drove the stakes with my maul into the sand about half their length in a straight row across the cove at a point where it was about eight rods wide. I placed the poles on the inside of these stakes, and drove other stakes on the inside of the poles, and tied withes around the top of the stakes to prevent the poles from floating. I then shoveled sand on these, making a bank completely covering it. I had not succeeded in throwing on as much sand as I wished, when the incoming tide caused me to leave work. I returned to my hut very tired; for I had not stopped to eat during the day, wishing if possible, to get the job done before the returning tide should drive me away.

When I returned to my hut I found Charlie sitting on a stone beside it waiting for me. He had been there for a couple of hours. He looked pale and thin and very miserable. He had not entered the hut at all, or helped himself to anything to eat, although, judging from his looks, he must have been hungry.

I was only a few minutes in warming some fried kid,

and making some tea. Then bringing a pan of cool milk from the little stream where I had put it to keep it cool covered with a large plate, and a dish of cheese curds made from sour milk, we sat down to the table made of a large, flat stone, and both ate very heartily—I because of my long task and Charlie because of his long fast.

Very little was said until we were nearly through our meal, when Charlie broke the silence by saying, “Well, I think you are the most ingenious man I ever saw. I believe you could spread a feast on this island if it were a barren rock.”

“No,” said I; “but having had a great deal of experience in camping, and making the most of everything, I have learned how to live outside of civilization and its appliances.”

“Well, I wish we could manage as you can; but we cannot, and we have got into a terrible mess. I have had to come to you for help. I come with very poor grace and very reluctantly; but all our pride is destroyed by sheer necessity. I hope I may not frighten you when I tell you that, except myself, every one of our company is down with some kind of fever, and I am still quite lame from my cut. The fact is, we have not had enough good substantial food to keep up our strength, and then we have had to suffer so many hardships of late to which we were unaccustomed, that it has told on us by producing a good soil for the seeds of malaria to fall into.”

“Your cut has been the means of saving you,” said I. “So you see there is no evil that befalls us with-

out a corresponding good, if we only see the good when it comes."

"Well," said Charlie, "I had no intention of staying anything like so long when I left the camp; but I was compelled to wait for you, and now I have to ask you straight—Will you help such ingrates as we all are?"

"That depends upon who asks my help and the spirit in which it is asked," said I.

"Well," said Charlie, "I will tell you the whole truth. The women are completely broken down and, I believe, would almost kiss your feet to have you return. I felt very bad at the time of your row with the Commodore. I had tried to persuade him not to come into the hut that day. I did not blame you, and I now tell you that you did right, and I return my hearty thanks to you for what you did for me. Herbert is greatly under the influence of the Commodore, and is sulky because you struck him. He says he had no intention of attacking you, but was only going to interfere to stop the fight; but he says he will not interfere with you again in any way, and forgives you for striking him. My own opinion is, that Herbert either intended to attack you, or hold you while the Commodore did, and I think you did well to give him a blow. As to the Commodore, he says he will forgive you and let by-gones be by-gones."

"Well, Charlie, your report bears the impress of truth; but it don't satisfy me. If you and the women were here, I would take care of you cheerfully; but neither the Commodore nor Herbert suits me. I

don't want them to forgive me for anything I have done. I have done nothing that I am sorry for, and nothing for which I want forgiveness. I consider it a gross insult on their part to offer to forgive me. It implies that they believe me to have wronged them, whereas they have done much, very much, for which they should ask my forgiveness in the most humble manner, and until they so ask it, and promise better conduct in the future, I will not enter their camp. My remarks apply with much greater force to the Commodore than they do to Herbert."

"For God's sake and the sake of humanity, please don't say that," said Charlie. "You must help us, or we will all be dead inside of a week. Please don't let the rest of us suffer for the Commodore, when we are so penitent for our treatment of you."

"Well, Charlie, I will tell you what I will do. I will give you food for them all to-night, and you can return and take care of them until morning. Tell the Commodore what I say, and if he is prepared to ask my pardon for his cruel treatment, I will go over and help you every day until they are better. That is the best that I can do. And now, what have you given them?"

"Oh, frogs, plantain and fowl. The eggs have failed and Herbert had to kill the goat for food, for none of us could milk her, and we had nothing to eat."

"Did you give them tea?" I inquired.

"No," he said; "none of them seemed to care for it."

“How about the vessels that were burning when I left?”

“Herbert let the fire out too soon, and while some of them answered, the rest were too soft, and no good.”

“I have great faith in the tea as an anti-fever, and think you had better make a lot of it, strong, and give them all they can drink and keep it up continually. I think they will be able to drink it nicely with milk, and they may be able to eat something, as I can now season it with salt.”

I then milked my goats, while Charlie stood and looked on, wondering how tame and kind I had got them; for they would rub against me and lick salt from my hand, and stand to be milked like gentle cows.

I filled one of the small jugs with milk, and gave him some curd cheese, and some fried kid, showing him how to warm it. I then filled one of his pockets with tea, and started him for his camp, telling him to return in the morning, whether he could bring back a request for pardon from the Commodore or not.

He thanked me heartily, although it was evident that he had not got half of what he had hoped to get. He wanted my help in the camp to attend to the sick.

As soon as he was gone I took my basket and set out for the swamp and filled it with plantain. On my way back I gathered a lot of tea, which I dried before the fire. I took all the milk that I had, part of which was sour, and mixing it together, put it over the fire to curd, and when done spread it on a flat stone to dry.

When the evening came on I killed a kid, and after dressing it, hung it in a tree for the night.

The early morning brought Charlie with a very long face. His fire had gone out in the night, and he had exhausted every match they had in the camp and could not get it started again. The patients were no better, and the women wept when I did not return with him. Herbert sent and begged a thousand pardons for all he had done unkindly, and promised to never repeat his former unkind acts. The Commodore was sulky, and would not ask pardon; but would promise not to molest or interfere with me in the future.

I fitted Charlie out again with a load of provisions, gave instructions how to cook the steak from the kid, and told him to give them plenty of tea, and to season their food with the salt. I then filled another jug with milk, and giving him my case of matches, instructed him how to start the fire. I told him not to neglect the tea and to return again in the evening, and as soon as he could bring word from the Commodore, asking for my pardon, I would go with him to their camp and help them.

I saw a tear in his eye as he left, and I felt very like relenting, but remembered that unless the Commodore was now brought to time I would have no permanent peace with him. I said, "Charlie, my heart aches for you, but the Commodore must come down."

When Charlie was gone, I went to the cove to look after my dam, taking my shovel with me. I spent the

rest of the forenoon putting sand on it. Already there was quite a little pool above the dam, but no fish in it.

After dinner I went and picked some berries and brought them to camp to give to Charlie for the invalids. During the afternoon I undertook a job of blacksmithing. I took the iron bar and put one end into the fire to heat. I had found some sharp flint stones near the shore and had brought them with me. I fastened one of these into a crevice of the rock with its sharp edge up, and then taking out the hot iron, I proceeded to cut off about three inches of one end. This I had to do very gently, using the back of the axe for a hammer, tapping lightly until I had cut a crease in it, on every side. I broke several flints before I got it cut sufficiently to warrant an attempt at breaking it. At last I set to and broke it, using the back of the axe. Having accomplished this, I sharpened one end of the bar into the form of a sharp punch, and hardened it by cooling it in goat fat. I then punched a hole through the piece that I had cut off, and hardening it as I did the other, I put a wooden handle into it, and behold I had a hammer.

I had scarcely finished this job when Charlie returned to say that the Commodore asked for my pardon.

I at once set to work to fit up my camp so as to leave it for the night, and in a short time Charlie and I were on our way to his camp, bearing such things as I had to take to them, including the berries, and my axe to cut up a lot of logs for the fire.

CHAPTER XI.

*The Commodore's refusal—The ladies' plea—I relent—
My hospital—I consider the situation—Resolve to
build—The new houses—My fish-trap—Our removal
to new quarters—The ladies' house.*

ON arriving at the camp, I went directly to the Commodore and said to him, "Charlie tells me that you have repented of your cruelty toward me, and that you wish to be forgiven." This was putting it in a way that none of them had anticipated. I mistrusted that the whole of them had made a set-to on the Commodore and had got his consent to let Charlie tell me that he repented and asked my pardon, while he had no intention of standing by the position when they were again in circumstances to make them independent of me. He replied that he did not know that Charlie had represented it in that light, and thought it was a little too strong. I said, "I thought as much," and turned to leave the hut, when Herbert spoke up and asked me to wait a moment until he explained. I told him to go on. He said the Commodore could not feel friendly toward me; but at the urgent request of the others, and for their sakes, he consented to take a sort of neutral position, and had

allowed them to represent him as they pleased, and he would not demur; but to ask him to beg my pardon to my face, he thought was putting it very strong, and made it very embarrassing for the Commodore.

"This repentance," said I, "of yours and the Commodore is very like the death-bed repentance of an old sinner; it has a mental reservation in it. I am not coming here to nurse men to health who are to be my sworn enemies as soon as they are strong again." Turning, I left the hut.

Mrs. Travers called feebly to me and asked me to speak to her. She said, "Do forgive us and help us, for we are in great distress. Annie is delirious most of the time, and I am very sick; poor Charlie is our only stay, and he cannot help us much. Don't let us die because of the obstinacy of the Commodore. It would be so awful to die and be buried on this island so far from home. Oh, please do help us, for you know how to do everything."

I saw that the time had come when humanity must assert itself, and rise above passion. So I told her that I had come to help them and I would stay. She replied, "Thank you ever so much, and life will be too short for me to manifest all the gratitude I feel."

The evening was drawing on, and I saw that there was much to be done. I soon gave the women some strong tea and told them to drink all they could of it; for I believed it would prove an antidote to the fever. I gave them milk to drink, and told them not to attempt solid food until they felt like it, that plenty of milk and tea would be sufficient, and it would be easy to

keep it convenient at all hours of the day or night. I told Charlie he might wait on the two men. I cut a quantity of wood and brought it to the camp, so as to be able to keep up the fire, and I put the place into order generally.

I said to Charlie that I thought the patients were too close together, and that some steps should be taken to separate them. The aerial bower in which the women were was too high to be convenient either for us or for them, and I thought we had better get them down from it, and place them farther from the fire. He thought I was right. I then set to work about two rods further up the stream and put two poles of about eight feet long parallel with each other on stones, about two feet from the ground, and three or four feet apart. Across this frame I put small poles a few inches apart, until I had it covered. I got Charlie to cover it over thickly with leafy twigs, and on these a layer of long grass, while I made the frame of another such bed, about six feet to one side of this. Then I placed poles in the crotches of the trees, higher than our heads, and over and against these, branches, until I had it quite enclosed. With grassy pillows and soft beds I felt sure our patients would be much more comfortable, and this would help them to recover. Charlie helped Mrs. Travers down and upon one of the beds; but it required both of us to carry Annie. We placed a flat stone near the head of each bed for a table on which to set vessels with milk and tea, and left them feeling much more comfortable. Mrs. Travers remarked, "This feels so much better,

and I am so thankful for the change!" It was some time after dark before we had finished; but we worked by the firelight. Afterward we threw all the grass and branches off the old bed and renewed it with fresh material. Herbert climbed up to it, and we fixed a stone on the corner of his bed and placed both tea and milk for him to take whenever he felt thirsty during the night. We then fixed a similar bed in the hut for the Commodore, laying one end of the poles on the bench and the other on stone. At a little distance from the hut, but within calling distance of both it and the bower, I made a comfortable bed for Charlie, covering it with boughs, and had him lie down for the night. Throwing a lot of fuel on the fire I felt confident that they would all sleep until morning.

As soon as it was daylight I milked my goats, and taking the milk and such provisions as I thought they might need, I went again to their camp. I spent most of the forenoon in making conveniences of every possible kind, and doctoring them with tea, milk, curds, berries, etc. I also cut a large quantity of fuel for them, and returned to my camp in time for dinner. After dinner I went to the cove to examine my fish trap, in the hope of finding fish for the sick ones; but there were no fish, and the water did not appear to be deep enough to make my trap a success. I took my shovel and excavated a lot of sand out of the centre, and threw it toward the sides and on the dam and returned to my camp.

Sitting down, I began to consider the situation and endeavor to reach a plan for the future. There was

nothing for it — I must provide for the company. That was a settled point. Now, how best to do it? That was the question. Should I build a permanent camp on the site of the old one, on the site of my present one, or on a site yet to be chosen? The only real advantage of the old site was its proximity to the hill.

The advantages that the hill afforded, were eggs and fowl in their season, and its elevation for a look-out for a sail. I felt sure that as soon as the ladies had regained their health, they would want to spend a large share of their time on the look-out, although I attached very little importance to it, and felt that if we ever left the island it would be in a boat of our own building. I reasoned it out in this way: If this island were in the regular track of vessels there would be more signs of its having been touched at, than there were. Then I remembered having heard some of the sailors say, before we left the "Watchword," that we were a long way out of our course. I concluded that we were in a northwesterly direction from Auckland, perhaps from ten to twelve hundred miles. That we were too far north to be in the line for vessels going from New Zealand to the Cape, too far west to be in the line of those going along the coast of America, and too far east for those going from Hawaii or Samoa to New Zealand or Australia. I came to the conclusion that only some vessel driven from its course by foul weather, as were we, would ever be likely to pass near our island. I thought perhaps the island was unknown to the civilized world, and so no regular visits would be made; or if known,

its diminutive size and comparatively small proportion of arable land — which was not sufficient to support a small population even — would prevent its ever being a station for any vessel to call at. These considerations led me to fear that we would never be taken off by a passing vessel. But it would not be wise to say this much to the women, or it would destroy the only source of comfort left them — a faint hope of rescue.

These conclusions were not calculated to give me comfort; but they were calculated to prevent me from neglecting to make provision for a protracted stay on the island. So I decided to lay my plans on the assumption that the island was to be our home and our burial place.

I at length decided to build a house, or houses, suitable for the whole company, on such site as I should find most desirable, and fit up a home as comfortable as the circumstances would allow, into which we would move, and then we could have a thorough understanding about all the duties that were to be performed and by whom, and get into a regular system. This would possibly remove the friction now existing, and help us to become more reconciled to our lot.

The site was the question. I started up the little gully about one hundred and fifty yards, prospecting for a good place to build, as the ground was rather uneven about my hut. Here the gully forked. The one coming from the north began about ten rods further on, by a cluster of tiny springs coming out of the rocky crevices. The rock above this was almost bare and nearly level for a few yards in every direction.

The rock about here was a sort of gray slate, lying in thin layers that could be quarried easily, and would make many useful things for our house.

This was near the goat pasture, and from it by far the largest proportion of our supplies must come. The swamp, our other source, was not very far distant to the south, and the cove where I hoped to catch fish was about a like distance to the northwest. The springs would furnish us with abundance of water, and fuel was plentiful in quite a large portion of that section.

Here, then, all considered, was the best place to build, and the fallen dry trees would furnish me with the material. Having reached this decision, I returned to my camp preparatory to visiting the "hospital," as I now called it.

I found the patients generally improved. Annie was the only one in whom the improvement was not visible; but as her symptoms were not worse, I pronounced her better. Her case being one of relapse it required a longer time to effect an improvement. Charlie was attending to his duties manfully. I told him I would bring all the supplies, do all the cooking and prepare all the fuel, and that he must do the nursing, feed the patients and keep up the fire in my absence. I believed it was the tea that was helping them, and said he must urge them to take all they could.

I visited them every morning and evening for about two weeks, carrying food of every kind, already cooked, so that Charlie had only to warm it up and

serve it to them. At the end of this time they were all convalescent, Annie only being too weak to walk.

Well, how had I employed my time during the day, between the visits? The first two days I had spent at my fish-trap. I found that the bank that I had formed was a failure. It only allowed the surf to roll over it, in which the fish would not swim, so I cut out a piece of it in the centre about ten feet wide; then I dug out a ditch through the centre, throwing the sand as far as possible to the sides; then I threw stones over the sides of this ditch to prevent the sand from washing back again, and then made a barricade of stones about two feet high, across the ditch on a line with the dam. The top of these stones was not as high as the original bed of the cove, and on the inside would be quite a pond, say ten by twenty feet in size, and, allowing for some sand to wash in, from a foot to a foot and a half deep. This trap was successful, and nearly every time I visited it, which was from two to three times a week, I brought away one or two fishes of some sort.

Having added fish to our food supply, I commenced to construct a house, or rather three houses, for the plan that I adopted was a sort of triple house. I first cut a number of logs out of the fallen trees about fifteen feet long, and then an equal number about twelve feet long. The largest not being more than ten inches in diameter at the large end, and being dry, I could easily manage to draw them to the place of building. By cutting a small bushy tree, stripping the leaves off and laying it on the ground, rolling the log upon the top branches and taking the small tree by the large end, I

could draw it quite easily. Taking my axe and flattening the sides of the logs a little, near each end, I laid them up like a pen, until I reached the height I wanted. Then by laying two more logs on one side than on the other, I made a pitch to my roof to carry off the rain. I then cut other logs long enough to reach all the way over the top, and to extend about two feet over at the highest side. These I split in two, and taking my axe, hollowed out the flat side like a trough; then laying two beside each other, hollowed side up, and turning one over the joint, hollowed side down, I made a perfectly water-tight roof. Over the west end of the first house, or shanty, that I built, I extended the top logs between three and four feet, and also built the roof over for the purpose of forming a sort of verandah. The highest side of my first house was to the south. I then built another exactly similar house to the south of this about four feet, with its highest side to the north. The projecting roofs meeting, formed a sort of covered passage of about four feet wide between the houses, and the roofs projecting on the west side made a verandah across that side. I now cut a hole in each for a door in the east end, the floors being the flat rock on which they were built. As the openings between the logs were not yet filled, it was not necessary to cut windows. I now built beds, two in the north house and three in the south one, similar to those I have already described, then fixed up a table in each out of large flat stones, made some benches in the same way, and pronounced my houses ready for occupation.

My invalids were all in a fit condition to undertake the journey of removing except Annie, who was still very weak. So I thought it a good time to tell them what I had done. They were greatly surprised and pleased when I told them I had the body of two houses made for them, and that I could complete them while they occupied them, as they only wanted the chinking done to make them very substantial and comfortable. I advised that they move at once. There was nothing to carry but a few dishes, and these Herbert and the Commodore could take, and Charlie and I would carry Annie by making a litter on two poles.

We formed a strange procession as we moved slowly on along the rough path, on that solitary little island. Charlie and I led the company. Mrs. Travers walked slowly after us. Herbert and the Commodore followed on behind. When Charlie and I stopped to rest they all stopped, and when we moved they all moved, until at length our company had taken possession of its new quarters.

Mrs. Travers at once inquired where I was going to be quartered. I told her it was my intention to build another cabin, larger than either of these, just to the east of them, and when it was done I intended to have my quarters in it; until then I would camp in my hut, where I was very comfortable. She and Annie joined in saying that it was too bad that I should first provide a house for them, while I still had only a hut for myself.

My next job was to chink up the ladies' house a

little higher than their heads all around, so that they could enjoy some degree of privacy, and Charlie got long grass and filled all the interstices around the chinks.

I next built a door for their house. I did this by hewing out enough flat pieces of the right length. I hewed out two cross pieces to fasten these together, and allowed one end, which I left thicker than the other part, to project to form a hinge. I took my iron bar, and heating the sharpened end in the fire, burned holes through the end of these hinges to swing them on. Then I burned holes through the strap of the hinge, and corresponding ones through the hewed planks of the door, and fitted wooden pegs into them, wedged at either end, until I had a door made with wooden strap hinges. Then I made pieces on which the door was to hang, making the plug part to fit the holes in the straps, and with a square shoulder for the straps to ride on, after which I burned holes through these and corresponding holes in the hewed door jamb and fastened them on with wooden pegs driven in. Then I made a wooden latch, and fixed it on with wooden pegs, also a catch for it, fastened on the front jamb in the same way. A string of raw goat skin tied to this and worked through a hole burnt through the door a little higher up, completed the job, and the women had a house with a door to it, and by pulling the string from the hole, it was locked.

CHAPTER XII.

*Soap-manufacturing—Skin-curing—The rice crop—
Our strained relations—My tailoring—House-build-
ing—My talk with Mrs. Travers—My talk with
Charlie—I refuse to help the men any more.*

WE had now been on the island over two months, and the real work for providing ourselves with substantial comforts had all been done within the last few weeks, and the whole of it had fallen to my lot. The others were now better, and very fair quarters had been provided for them, and I felt that they ought to do what they could to help, and do it willingly, without being asked. They saw how hard I had to work and that I was far behind with what wanted to be done, and yet I got but little help from them. Charlie helped the most; but since the others had got better, he seemed to have greater pleasure in sitting and talking with them, or in taking a stroll to the shore or hill, than he had in helping me. I determined that I would not be a slave for them, and the friction that I had hoped would cease, seemed likely to increase. Herbert did a little work, but the Commodore positively never turned his hand.

The rice was nearly ripe, and the crop was to be

garnered. The tea must be gathered and dried, or it would soon be useless. A thousand things required to be done to complete our outfit, and I almost despaired of ever getting through it. None of us had a change of clothing, and any washing that we had done, had been a sort of rinse in water, and we were therefore not too clean. So I decided to make soap. I went to the swamp and gathered willows, and cut a lot of sticks the size of a man's finger. I wove the willows around these and made the tube of a basket, without ends, about three feet long and two feet across. This I set up on a flat stone slightly inclined. I then put some grass in the bottom of it and all around against the inside, and packed it full of ashes, by pounding with the square end of a stick. I then put water on the top of the ashes and caught the lye as it filtered from the bottom into an earthen vessel. I took all the fat that I had saved from the kids, and boiling it in the lye, I made soap with which to wash our clothes.

The women were astonished at the process, and even, after my showing them how to wash clothes, it was amusing to see the awkward efforts that they made, and the results that they achieved. A real washerwoman would have lifted her hands in horror had she looked at a washing of such color on her line.

I knew that all the clothing we had would be worn to shreds in a little while. My own cheap suit was threadbare, and if we were to be saved by a passing ship we would all want a suit; so I determined to make clothes, and lay my own away as a sort of best suit, if I ever found occasion to wear it. In some

places on the island there were scrubby little trees, the under bark of which had an astringent property, and I was satisfied that it possessed some tannin. I accordingly gathered a quantity of it, and steeping it on the fire, extracted the juice. This I evaporated down until it was pretty strong liquor. I took the skins of the kids and put them into a vessel with ashes and water, until the hair loosened, and then taking the hair off, I put the skins into my tan liquor and left them to tan. Out of these I made a complete suit, moccasins and all.

The plantain had become too old to use, and the rice was now ready. Taking the basket that I made to carry clay in, and putting a kid skin inside of it, I went to the swamp. I made a raft of logs, tied together with withes, and taking a long pole with which to push the raft about, I set to work to gather rice. I did this from day to day until all the vessels that I could spare were filled. None of the men offered to help me gather rice; but whenever the meals were served they were on hand to get their share. When I had gathered all the rice that I desired, I said to Charlie, "Do you men expect to eat rice in the future?" He said he hoped so. "Well," said I, "who do you expect to gather it for you?" He said he had not thought of it. I said, "Then don't depend on me, for a very sudden change is coming over the culinary arrangements here, so don't be surprised, and remember that when I change I shall stand firm." This led to a council of war, the only apparent result being the gathering by Herbert and Charlie of a quan-

tity of rice—too small for their wants—and putting it in a heap on the stone floor of their house.

During all this time I had not spent a moment in the society of one of them. In the forenoon the women and sometimes the Commodore and the two young men, would spend most of their time under the verandah on the west side of the house, and in the afternoon either in the passage between the houses, or in the shade of the east side of the house. None of them ever asked me to sit down with them or undertook in any way to engage with me in conversation, except such as was necessary in connection with things to be done. None of them ever came to my hut except when they wanted something. When I cooked the victuals they would always come and get a supply. One of the women would get enough for the two women, and one of the men, either Herbert or Charlie—the Commodore never came—would get enough for the men. The Commodore had not spoken to me since coming to the camp.

My original design in building the house was to make a third building to the east of the two that I had made, larger than either of them, and extending across the two, with a roof joining the others, covering a passage between them; but the way the men were acting decided me to change my plan, for I saw—now that they were all well—that they had quite forgotten the one who had nursed them back to life when they were sick. I spent one whole day in picking tea, which I spread in the sun, and Charlie seeing it, he and Herbert went and gathered some for themselves;

but like the rice, not a sufficient quantity to last them until the next season.

My evenings I had spent in making clothes of the tanned skins of the kids. I had cut them out with my knife, and sewed them together with strings cut from the skins, put through holes made with the point of a sharpened bone. They did not fit very well, and the seams were not very smooth, nor were they in any style to be found in tailors' charts. There were a pair of trousers, a sort of smock shirt and a pair of moccasins. The hat that I first made had to be renewed several times, and I had now a superior and more endurable article—made by weaving long grass through twigs. Fitted out with a new suit, I washed my old clothes and hung them out to dry, preparatory to being put away in my wardrobe.

The first morning that I came out in my leather suit was to begin the construction of my own house, and I had not been long at work, when I found my companions were attracted by my appearance, and Charlie came over to examine my clothes. I told him my reason for putting away my old clothes, and it made him look rather serious; for he doubtless began to think that he, too, would soon require a new suit, and was likely wondering where he would find a tailor. He returned to their house, and an animated conversation ensued near the door, the ladies taking part in it. They watched me work for some time, when it evidently began to dawn on them that I was beginning to build.

When they first came to the house I had explained

to Mrs. Travers that my intention was to build immediately adjoining their house, and now I was preparing my foundation still further east than my old hut. They doubtless wondered at the change in my plans, and presently Mrs. Travers came over to where I was at work, and asked if I was commencing to build. I answered in the affirmative, and she said she thought I was going to build close beside them.

“That was my original intention; but as I find that I am not of your set, and my immediate presence would likely annoy you, I have chosen this site.”

“I am afraid a complete reconciliation has not taken place, and that there is trouble for us in the future,” said she.

“Very likely, and it will probably begin soon,” I said.

“Could you not be persuaded to change the place of building your house, from the site now selected?”

“I think I could be persuaded—perhaps easily—to change the site; for it would not require much persuasion to induce me to go farther away.”

“You surely won’t desert us again?”

“No; I will feed you two women. You shall not want for food—so long as the Commodore continues on his good behavior. Should he interfere with me I may alter my plans; but you must clothe yourselves. If you are sick, I will nurse you; but that is all you must expect of me. I do that freely and voluntarily. You may depend upon me; but I may tell you, and you may repeat it to the men, I will not feed or cook for them. I have gathered enough tea and rice for

you two and myself; but they will not be allowed to share it, though they starve. I made the raft and they were welcome to use it; if they could not gather rice for themselves, it is none of my business. The tea grew abundantly, and they had nothing to do but collect it. When have they killed a kid? When have they cooked a meal? Am I to do everything for them? Am I their servant? I may further tell you that we will in all probability never leave this island, except in a boat of our own construction, and this hope that prevents action may as well be abandoned. We are out of the track of regular vessels, and the island is too small to attract commercial attention, even if its existence is known, and the chances are one thousand to one against our rescue. Now the winter is coming on, and the storms that prevail through the wet season would make it altogether too dangerous a thing for us to undertake to go to sea in a craft of our own make until another summer has well set in, or more than a year from the time we landed here. Under these circumstances we must prepare, with an almost absolute certainty, to remain here through the wet season. To this end I built the houses for yourself and company, because I knew that I was the only one who could use the axe. I have built those as far as they are finished, and I will complete yours when the weather demands it. The other will remain as it is all winter, if its inmates do not complete it. They are not children. They know as well as I do what is to be done, and the only reason why they don't work is because they think I will do the work for them. I

fear they will find their mistake. I am heartily glad I did not build my house when I built the others. Were it not for you two women I would not build within a mile of them. Now you understand me, and you can make them understand; for the time of their feeding at the expense of my labor is at an end."

She returned to the house, and the whole company spent the rest of the forenoon at the side of the house in the shade. I presume they were talking over the situation and trying to decide what was best to be done, for they must have seen that another crisis was at hand.

At noon they came for their food as usual, and not a word was spoken about what I had told Mrs. Travers.

In the afternoon I again went to my work and Charlie came to me and asked if he could help me.

"I don't know that you can," said I. Then thinking it was time to come to an understanding with him, I said, "Charlie, when you came here to me and got me to go and help you, I thought things were to go smoothly in the future. You and Herbert both professed your willingness to bear your share of the burdens that lay upon us; but what have either of you done? The Commodore professed nothing and he has lived up to it, and I expect nothing from him; it is too late for us ever to be friends. You all feel yourselves my superiors, and you show only too plainly what you feel. Not one of you has asked me to sit with you under the roof that I built. Not one of you has ever undertaken to while away or make pleasant

one hour of my life. Not one of you has ever spoken a word to me except on business. If I draw near to any of you when in conversation you hush your talk, although there are no neighbors to whom I could carry tales, were I disposed to do so. This is all proof to me that you feel toward me as you might toward a negro slave; and why? My family were associated with the best families in England, and I was rather a favorite than otherwise in society. I never did an act in my life that would make even my angel mother blush. My life has been above reproach. I left home a jolly young man and went to the colonies. I worked in the mines and at sheep farming, where I associated with rough men, and not to appear odd to them, I adopted their manners and dropped my own. I neglected my grammar and correct diction, and for years my manner has been suited to my calling. The change is no doubt greater than I had supposed, and you, fresh from college and drawing-rooms, think me a low-bred ignoramus and treat me so. I am ashamed of nothing in my life, except, perhaps, the unpolished ways into which I have fallen. Now, do you suppose that I will submit to be made a lackey of, and that without reward? Do you expect that I will become provider, cook, washerwoman and scrubber, for people to whom I owe nothing and who have no claim on me, except that circumstances have thrown us together? You must take me for an idiot, pure and simple. I tell you emphatically that I will not do it! No, Charlie, I have no work at which you can help me. Had you all played your parts and helped me, it would have been

an easy task for us to have lifted these logs to build this house, and after my building a house for the others I expected a willingness on the part of you all to help me; but it is now too late; you can never do what you should have done, and you are the only real sufferers. After to-day I shall only prepare food enough for myself and the two women. They may come three times a day, and I will give them enough for them both, but no more. You three men will have to build a fire-place and provide and cook your own food. If you want milk you will have to capture goats and milk them. If you want flesh, you will have to capture kids and kill them. If you want fish, you may go to my trap and take them. If you want rice or tea until they grow again, you will stock yourselves. I will give you a few vessels with which to do your cooking for the present; should you want more and will carry enough clay so that I can make more, I will do so and you may burn them in my furnace. I will be a neighbor to you and will lend such things as you cannot make. I will cut logs for you to draw or carry to your fire; then by putting one end in the fire, they will burn off, and you can push them up when they are burned off. I will show you how to do what you do not know, but beyond this I will not go. No, I will not accept of your help in building my house, and I think you will find enough to do to help yourselves, and my advice is, that you set about it at once."

Charlie said he was very sorry. He knew they had not treated me rightly; but he hoped something could

be done yet to reach an understanding, so that they could do certain things and make it agreeable all around. It really seemed too bad to have to keep up two fires for six people, and he hoped at least that they would be able to cook at my fire. Then they would need more vessels, and he thought they would accept of my offer in regard to them. They had been thinking the clothing question over, and he really did not know how they would manage if I did not help them in this respect. "In fact," said he, "we have not appreciated you at your worth, and there we have made our mistake; and we are all too ready to take the Commodore's advice and be guided by him. Now if you will allow me to help you put up the logs of your house, it will be entirely in consideration of past favors on your part, and will be a real pleasure to me."

"No, Charlie; I will not allow you to do it. I will build my house myself, and do you go to work for yourselves, for you have plenty to do."

"Cannot we arrange to get milk from you, for we cannot milk the goats. For my part, I am perfectly sure I cannot do it, and Herbert spent nearly half an hour trying the goat over at the old camp, and could not get a drop."

"I will show you how to do it, and a little practice will make you all right."

Charlie looked very serious for a while and then said, "Well, I am very sorry, and I know we are all to blame."

He then turned and went back to the house, and I went on with my work until evening.

I saw the Commodore and Herbert return from the hill about five o'clock, and when supper was cooked, Charlie and Mrs. Travers came and got sufficient for all their wants. This was the last time that I would prepare enough for more than three people.

CHAPTER XIII.

Trouble with the Commodore—I move again—My new camp—I build a castle—Precautions against assault—My furnace—Settled in a new home.

THE next morning, Charlie came down to the fire and said that it was impossible for them to get their breakfasts, for they had nothing to cook and no means of cooking, and if I would give them their breakfasts they would try and be prepared for dinner.

“Charlie, I told Mrs. Travers yesterday morning that the end of my providing had arrived, and asked her to tell you. She certainly did so, for your visit indicated as much. I then told you immediately after dinner, knowing that you took no steps to prepare for your breakfast, while the Commodore and Herbert spent their afternoon on the hill. Neither you nor they believed that I had firmness enough to carry out my resolutions. What I have said I mean. I have only prepared enough for the two women and myself, and I will prepare no more. Take a brand from my fire and kindle a blaze; put a stone into it to heat and go and get fish or frogs. Do as you please. I am done with you.”

Charlie did not take my advice, but went back to

the house, and I continued with my work. I had not worked more than an hour, when looking up, I saw the Commodore and Herbert approaching my hut. Anticipating what they were after, I started for the hut at full speed. They succeeded in reaching it first, and when I got to the door they were on the point of leaving. The Commodore had seized a crock with fried kid in it, and Herbert one of milk curd. I said, "Gentlemen, please lay down my food and leave my hut." The Commodore lifted the crock and threw it straight at me. I had not anticipated this assault, and it struck my left shoulder and partly turned me around. The Commodore followed up the attack and, taking advantage of the confusion that the blow from the crock had put me into, struck me a heavy blow on the side of the head, which felled me to the ground. I tried to get up; but he struck me again, sending me sprawling. I lay still and pretended that I was badly hurt. He then returned to the hut, took another crock of kid, and left, pouring out vile imprecations on my devoted head, and threatening what he would do if I played off the gentleman, saying that I was only fit for a servant and he would make one of me, or break my infernal neck.

When they were gone, I got up and went into my hut and lay down on the bed to think. That I should remain there was impossible, and the only thing for me to do was to go away to the greatest distance. But where should I go? I had not explored the basin of the swamp except on the sides where we had made our camps. My exploring trip had been around the

coast. If I could find a stream of water or a spring on the south side of the swamp, where I could get water, I would be able to camp there nicely. But how should I get my goods away? The Commodore would very likely interfere to prevent it. However, whether I could get my goods away or not, I would go at once.

I got up and took an inventory of my bruises. My shoulder was sore where it was struck with the crock. The side of my head was swollen and my neck was stiff and sore from the last blow; but my legs were all right. I put my clothes on over my kid suit, took up my axe and iron bar and all my tanned skins, put a lunch of kid and curds into a kid skin bag that I had made to take the place of a pocket, and slung it over my shoulder with a kid string. I then left the hut by the goat pen, down the gully, to the main gully, keeping amongst the trees so as not to be observed. Turning up the gully to the right, I followed it to the swamp, and turning again to the right, followed the west end of the swamp from the north to the south. I was pleased to find trees, grass, bushes of various kinds, and some springs sending water into the swamp. On the south side I found two or three very convenient camping grounds. I selected one, convenient to a cluster of springs of sweet water, and only a short distance from the margin of the swamp. There was an abundance of grass growing, and a little further in, rice. A clear passage made a good place for landing my raft, and I decided to move my goods across the swamp on the raft, instead of around it

by hand. I fixed up a hut with bushes and a bed, and leaving my clothes and everything except my axe, I returned to the north side of the swamp and put my raft into position. I made a paddle to move the raft with if I found the water too deep for the pole, and then returned to my hut by the way I left it. I did not find the place disturbed, although from the state in which the fire was, I knew it had been used. I milked the goats and put the milk to cool for supper. I then filled the rice into jugs and put everything into shape for moving. When Mrs. Travers came for her supper I gave it to her without a word. She noticed my swollen face and inquired if I had been hurt? I told her she was right, and she remarked that I was away at noon. I told her that I went for a stroll. She then went back to the house and I saw none of them that evening.

As soon as it was dark I began to carry my stuff away from the hut. I took all the rice that the jugs would hold, and all the meat and tea in the camp. I also took all the good earthen vessels; in fact, everything except a crock of soap and the leach through which I filtered the lye. These I carried over the hill and left amongst some bushes, until I got them all removed. I then carried them all another stage and put them on the raft. This job took me nearly all night. I dared not attempt to navigate the swamp until day-light; but as soon as the light was sufficient, I set my raft in motion and was not long in reaching the other shore in safety.

I did not stop to unload the raft, but returned by

land to the hut, and after milking the goats and drinking the milk, I pried open one corner of the pen and let the goats out. I had felt sure for some time that the goats would not leave me if let loose, and had intended when my house was built to liberate them. I knew that none of the inmates of the house would be up before seven or eight o'clock, and I meant to try and get the goats to follow me to my new home and leave a clean camp to surprise them in the morning. Taking some salt in my hand and giving the goats a taste of it, I started by the nearest road for the west end of the swamp. The goats ran beside me, bleating noisily. I was afraid that the bleating would wake some of the inmates of the house; but if it did, they made no sign while I was in sight, which was not long.

I had not much difficulty in getting them to the new camp, but had grave fears of being able to keep them there until they should become accustomed to it. At first I thought that I had better build a pen for them, but decided to risk the chance of their leaving. I soon unloaded my raft and brought all the stuff to my hut, and then lay down and took a good sleep.

What a surprise no doubt awaited them on going to my hut in the morning! The fire gone out, for I had not renewed it; not a match in the camp, for Charlie had used all they possessed in the camp by the hill, and the only ones on the island were a few that remained in my match safe when Charlie returned it. Very little food and no milk. They were in a nice fix. Well, the Commodore, "their protector," was to blame

for it. How could he be so cruel? Cruel both to me and his friends, for now they would have to suffer with him.

Upon awaking I found the goats had done just what I feared they would do. Instead of feeding on the luxuriant grass that grew in great abundance all around, true to their mischievous natures, they had been browsing on my hut, and destroyed a large portion of it. I had not awakened, for I was very tired and sleepy. After satisfying themselves, they had lain down in the hut, and here I found them, happily chewing their cuds. I saw that they were not likely to leave me; but they would occupy both my hut and my bed, if they were at liberty to go where they pleased, and if I had no means of shutting them out of my dwellings.

I thought it very probable that I would not be molested again, and that they would not again seek to follow me; that this would likely be my permanent home until I should be rescued, if ever that time should come. So I determined to build sufficiently strong and close to serve me through the rainy season. I also decided to build a strong store-room in which to keep my rice stored, and in which to put my other food, whenever I found it necessary to leave my house. For I thought it quite possible that the cruel tyrant from across the swamp might make a raid on me at any time that he found their stores had run low.

A few rods back from my hut vegetable growth ceased and barren rock extended from this to the sea-shore, a distance of nearly half a mile. Large num-

bers of loose flat stones lay all over this, broken from the layers of which the rock was formed, by some natural convulsion in the past ages. I saw that I could build a house out of these stones with only a little more labor than it would require to build it of wood, by laying into walls, without mortar. I took my axe and hewed out pieces for jambs for doors and windows, and commenced to build a house of two rooms. The front or living room I made about twelve by fifteen feet, and the back or store-room six by fifteen. The roof I made all one pitch from the front to the back of the house. I built one outside door in the east end of the front room, and an inside door between the rooms, near the east end of the room. This door was hung on the store-room side and swung into that room. The windows, which were only openings, were too narrow for a man to get through and too high for the goats to jump into. They were three in number, two on the north side and one in the west end. I built the walls thick and strong so that they would stand quite a shock, should they ever be put to the test. Across the west end of the front room I built two poles into the walls, about two feet from the ground and about three and a half apart, on which to make a bed; and in the two east corners, on either side of the door, I built small poles into the walls angling across the corners, for the purpose of putting flat stones, or hewed pieces of wood on them for tables. In the north side of the room, between the windows, I put four pairs of short poles into the stones, and projecting into the room about a foot, for the purpose

of placing hewed shelves upon them to form a cupboard. When I had built the walls to the right height, I cut strong poles and laid them across from east to west like cross rafters, and cutting green trees, I peeled the bark off, in pieces about ten feet long all around the tree in one piece, and spread them on the poles, letting the upper row of bark lap over the lower one like shingles. I put on several thicknesses of this bark, each time breaking the joints, and then laid two poles across the roof one on the middle and the other at the bottom, and built a parapet of stones on the walls on the north, east and west, lying on the edges of the bark and the ends of the poles.

This made a very strong roof, and one that it would not be easy to break through, should any one ever undertake the job. It would also be safe to turn the water well, for several years.

My house, with its narrow windows, looked like a miniature fortress, and a stranger visiting the island and ascertaining the character of the animal life on it, would wonder why it was built in this substantial way. It was indeed a pity, that with only six human souls on the island such precautions were found necessary.

I made and hung a door in the same way that I had done in the house that I built for the women, but made the latch and its catch very much stronger. I then made a place for a string that was attached to the latch, to run over pegs and reach to the inside of the northwest window, where it fastened to a peg. When the string, by which the latch was regularly lifted, was taken from its hole in the door and this

string was attached to the latch, and its other end put on the peg by the window, the door could only be opened by a man standing on a short log of wood leaned against the house under the window, and reaching his hand through the window, pull the end of the string, and thus lift the latch. A stranger, who did not understand this little device, would find it impossible to open the door when the regular latch string was withdrawn, as I always withdrew it when I left my house alone, even for a short time. If the Commodore came he would not stop short of violence, in his determination to procure an entrance, and consequently the strength with which I built my door. Should he use violence, and secure an entrance to the living-room, to foil him in his attempt to get at my stores I built the door to that room still stronger than the other, and fastened a wide piece of wood across the middle of the door, on the inside. I then cut a log of wood and flattened the two sides, and fitted it in such a way that one end would rest against the outside wall, on the ground just opposite the door, and the other end lean against the strong cross-piece of the door. When this brace was put against the door, in the way I have described, I believe it would be impossible for one man to break the door down, even with a battering ram. So, should the Commodore attempt to break into my house, he would fail to get at the stores.

To remove this brace I had a very strong string attached to the upper end of it, and carried over pegs to the upper corner of the room at the west end, just under the roof. The end of this string had a small

peg of wood fastened to it, which dropped between the stones, and could not be seen from the room. By putting the hand over the top of the dividing wall at this point, and placing the fingers between the stones, this little peg could be reached, and by pulling the string attached to it the upper end of the brace would be lifted and the door could then be opened.

It had required a long time to build this house and complete it thus far, for I had had other work to do as well, and the rainy season was just commencing when I had the outside done. I laid the floor of the store-room with flat stones and moved all my stores into it, and let the brace down against the door, and kept it there continually, so as to be prepared for a surprise.

I built a house for the goats in which they would always find a dry bed, and in which I could milk them on rainy days. They were great pets, and being the only living things with which I associated, I made a great deal of them. They would follow at my heels wherever I went, and would try to sleep in my bed. Wherever I was at work they were with me; whenever I would sit down they were between my feet, or their heads were on my knees, or they were trying to climb over me, or were rubbing against me. I returned their affection and caresses, for they not only fed me, but were affectionate companions with whom I never had a quarrel. It would be much pleasanter if the human beings on the island were as agreeable companions as were these poor dumb brutes, that had so recently made the acquaintance of man.

I had built a furnace for cooking, something like my other one; but I took a different course in regard to fuel. Instead of keeping my fire burning brightly all the time, when I was through with my cooking, which I only did once a day, I took out the logs that were a-fire at one end, and laying them in a heap, covered the fire part over with sods; then it would smoulder away like fire in a coal pit. When I wanted my fire again I would open it out, return it to the furnace, and adding fuel, soon have a good blaze.

I did not eat as much meat as formerly. The goats' milk made good strong food. Rice boiled in the milk made very pleasant diet, and the cheese made from the curds was an agreeable change. I could get a feed of frogs' legs whenever I wished to have them, and occasionally I would go out and capture a kid, frying part of it, and roasting the rest.

I was getting very comfortably settled, and began to feel quite at home, considering my lonely circumstances. My days began to grow monotonous. I got up in the morning and milked my goats—a small job now, for the milk was failing—put the milk into a pan in the store-room, ate a breakfast of cold boiled rice and cheese, washing it down with a strong cup of cold tea, swept out my house and yard with a broom made by tying small branches upon a handle. I then made a trip to the highest point of the rock between my camp and the sea, to look for a sail. Returning, I made up my fire, cooked some meat or warmed it up, boiled some rice, and if I had any sour milk

made some curds. Then I would eat my dinner, putting away what rice was left, for supper and breakfast, fix my fire, cut some fuel, and go again to look for a sail. Returning, I ate my supper, as I had my breakfast, petted my goats awhile and then retired.

CHAPTER XIV.

No news from the old camp—Rope-making—Charlie's visit—His misery—I propose escape—His story of the trials at the old camp—Herbert's selfishness.

WHEN we came to the island I had no idea of the day of the week, or month. I had been so sick and had loafed around on the ship in such a way, and there had been so much confusion on board, and fear of being lost, that nobody had thought of speaking of the days. If the Commodore had kept any reckoning, I had heard nothing of it; but I hardly think that he had done so. I did not attempt to count the time on the island and so cannot tell how long it had been since I left the other camp; but it must have been not far from two months. I had not seen any of them, and I often wondered how they had got along? I never saw any smoke in their direction; yet they might have had a fire and the trees so obscured the smoke that I had not noticed it. I often thought of them. Their rice and tea would be nearly exhausted. I presumed that my fish trap was still gathering fish for them. The frogs could still be got, and they had learned enough of my way of capturing kids to do it easily. They were well housed, had

plenty of good water, and they had only to drag the smaller of the dry trees to the furnace and push one end into it to keep up their fire. I could not see why they should not get along very well, and since we could not live in peace together, we had better live apart. This was the way I looked at it, and if they were satisfied I was, and hoped they would never come near me again; for if they ever did, and the Commodore gave me occasion, I would take sweet revenge upon him.

I had found a sort of wild hemp, something like what I had seen in New Zealand, but I think of an inferior quality. I had gathered a lot of it and spread it out near my house to rot the woody part, as I had seen them do with flax in Ireland, when I had made a visit to that country with my father. I had beaten a lot of this with a stick on a stone and was twisting ropes, strings and things of this kind that I thought would be useful, and thus fill up my spare hours and the days of rain and storm.

While I was engaged twisting rope one day, in front of my house, with my goats lying about my feet, I was startled by a step, and looking up, saw Charlie approaching. He bade me good-day, asked after my health, and took the seat that I offered him on a block of wood. He had a very dilapidated look. His clothes hung on him in rags; his shoes were a great deal more hole than shoe, and he was thin and looked sick and miserable. He sat for some time without speaking, and when he did speak, it was in a voice full of tears. He said, "Well, you seem to be very

comfortable here; I wish we were as well fixed as you are."

"Yes, under the circumstances I have no cause to complain; but I should like the circumstances changed, and my condition changed proportionately."

He sat a little while before he again spoke, then with a heavy sigh he said, "Oh, for a mud hovel beside an Irish bog; oh, for a bootblack's outfit in the slums of the metropolis; oh, for a lackey's place in the servant's hall of the most ignoble in the realm; oh, for a dungeon in the tower of London; oh, for anything on earth but this, and I don't know but I might add truthfully—oh, for a grave in the sea. How much better it would have been for us if we had gone down in the 'Watchword'; if our trials had all ended with a plunge, a gasp, a ripple. I have lost all hope of ever being rescued, and life here is intolerable. How do you feel about it?"

I sat silently listening to this despairing outburst, and after taking a few moments to consider how to best answer it so as to drive away his gloom, I said, "Charlie, I believe there are millions of people in the world who would gladly change places with us. Our lot is not so bad as you think it; but it certainly is tiresome enough, and especially so for a young man who has always moved in the whirl of society and never had to take hold of and wrestle with the difficulties that beset the poor and the unfortunate; but bad as it is, it need not be endured unless we prefer it. I have been thinking that there is nothing to hinder us from building a craft in which to leave this island;

at least one chance in two of getting back into civilization. We may fail and we may succeed. Hope would keep us up while we sailed away day after day, and if despair came it would only be for a short time, and then death would end it all. We all have to die and we may as well die at sea a few days earlier, as to die here a few days later. If you think it best to try it, I will do my part; but I will never consent to build a boat and go to sea in it in company with the Commodore. He must stay here until taken off by friendlier hands than mine. Herbert can keep him company, and the other four can try the sea. What do you say to it?"

It was some time before he said, "I would do it if we all could go together; but the ladies would never consent to go in a boat. We have talked it over and the Commodore says as you do—that if we had a seaworthy boat or raft, we would stand a chance of being picked up or might reach some inhabited island, and get shipping from there to our home. The women said they would not trust themselves in such a thing and would rather die here on the land though they lived for fifty years longer. You and I might leave, and if we got to some place where civilized creatures live we could send for them, but I don't think I would trust myself on such a journey. We would be sure to come to grief."

"Well, suppose I try it. I don't much mind it; it has very little terror for me, for I am not very particular whether I get to England or not. I thought before leaving New Zealand I would return home and

see all the folks, and they would be so pleased to see me after my long absence, and they would make a great fuss over me, and the rest of my life would be made comfortable. My mother always seemed to think more of me than she did of any of the others; perhaps because I needed more thought. My brothers and sisters were all in a fair way to do well in life, and if my father is dead—as doubtless he and mother both are—he has, in all probability, left provision for me in his will. With thoughts and hopes of this kind I started for home, but the treatment I have received from your company has taught me that I have degenerated more than I had supposed, and it is likely I would be so rude and rough that they would all be ashamed of me, and wish to push me aside, perhaps deny me altogether. This would make it so unpleasant for me that I could not remain at home, and I would indeed be friendless and homeless and unhappy. Rather than meet a reception of that kind I would make my grave in the Pacific; for while I know I have lost a great deal of my refinement, I have lost none of my pride, and I would not stay one hour with my own people if I thought I was not only heartily welcome, but that they were really glad to have me return home. Having considered the matter very calmly, I now fear the reception that would await me, and I am not very particular whether I get home or not. I certainly should like a little more civilized life than this, and would not object to making a struggle to get it.”

Conversation seemed difficult. Charlie had evi-

dently come for a purpose, and did not feel like entering into generalities until it was settled. I knew that he wanted to open up with some request. I did not feel in a humor for granting anything and was somewhat embarrassed, as I did not feel at all friendly toward him. I was full of curiosity to know all about how they had got along, yet hated to admit that I felt enough interest in them to inquire. At last I mustered the courage and inquired in this way :

“Well, as we have nothing to talk about but ourselves, you might tell me your experience since I left you.”

Charlie sat still for some minutes, then said :

“The first that I knew of the row that you had with the Commodore, was the next morning after you left. I knew that they had robbed you when they brought in your provisions, but did not know that you were there at the time. I supposed they had taken advantage of your temporary absence. Next morning, after breakfast, I strolled down to see you, as I missed you from your work, and judge of my astonishment when I found your camp entirely deserted. I returned to the house and told them that you had fled, and taken all your furniture, including your goats. Then we all went down to your camp and examined it, and tried to make out which way you had gone. This we discovered by your tracks, but did not follow further than to find that you had passed the west end of the swamp. We therefore concluded that you had gone to the south side. The women were very angry with the Commodore; but he has never told the particulars of the

trouble, so they do not know that a quarrel of any serious kind took place. The Commodore told me he thought he had got even with you, and this led me to presume that you had a big row, if not a fight. Well, our trouble began the same day, for the fire was out when we discovered your departure. To start a fire, I whittled splinters of wood and gathered dry leaves and then attempted to strike fire with a flint on my knife. I worked a long time before I succeeded in getting a spark to catch the leaves, and the fire went out several times after the leaves smoked. I blew and worked until my breath and my patience were both exhausted, and I then threw up the job. Herbert tried his hand at it, and after some time succeeded in getting a fire started. We gathered wood, and kept it going for some days, when, through neglect it went out again, and we have had to kindle it a dozen or more times since. Sometimes we would let it go for two or three days without kindling at all, and then make a set-to and keep it going for several days or weeks. Now we keep leaves and kindling near the fire, so that they are very dry, and it is not so difficult getting the fire started. The cooking is sometimes diabolical. Sometimes it is half burned up, sometimes half raw. We forget to put salt in it one time, and put too much in at another. We have broken so many of the pots and plates that we have not enough left to hold our food or eat from. The women are utterly incapable of doing anything, and our gallantry will not allow us to complain. So we do our best to wait on them; but it is a great bur-

den to us, and especially to me, upon whom most of the work of providing falls. Herbert will fuss about cooking for Miss Annie and will try to please her; but is not willing to go out to bring the food. I visit your fish trap about every other day; but latterly it does not catch many, as the sand has so filled it up that the depression does not amount to much, and often I go over to find it empty. At first it caught an abundance of fish; in fact, we were tired of them; but now we would like more of that kind of food. I think the sand could be shoveled out of the trap if we had a shovel, and enough muscle; but we have no shovel, and I fear the muscle would fail if we had one. We built a fire near to the house, but could not keep it going as well as we could in your furnace; consequently we keep it in the furnace now, so as to be able to keep it going; although it is very inconvenient, on account of its great distance from the house. Since the bad weather set in we find it quite impossible to use it at all, on many of the most stormy days. We have quit going to the big hill to look for a sail, as we have a good view from the hill back of the house, and the women go to it every day when the weather is fine. Herbert goes over to the hill with Annie whenever he can get away, and hangs around making love to her. I think he might give more attention to providing food, and less to courting. I am really imposed upon to the point of my endurance, and I often feel like making a firm strike. Herbert is too selfish, and Annie is too good-natured and thoughtless. She could not muster enough courage to tell him that he

should render more assistance to me, and so the thing goes on. Both the women and Herbert have been sick since you left, with symptoms of fever. Annie was quite low for a couple of weeks, but we took to your remedy, the tea, and they got better in a few days. I believe that tea is a perfect antidote to fever; but since you left we have had no milk, and we have quit using it as a beverage. We have all missed the milk and cheese more than anything else. The women especially complain of this loss; they wanted to come to you many times; but neither Herbert nor the Commodore would consent, and so we have all endured as best we could. But why should I repeat all this misery?"

I made no reply to his description, for I did not know what to say.

CHAPTER XV.

Charlie asks to live with me — My refusal, and my reasons — The storm — The wild goats tamed — My invention for cloth-making — A bad fit but a useful garment.

CHARLIE sat in a very thoughtful mood for a while, and then said, "I want to ask you a straight question. Will you let me come and live with you?"

"Why do you ask this?"

"Because we are not getting on at all, and we are all in the same plight. The Commodore and Herbert are afraid of you and they dare not come, and they do not want the women to come. I have put up with things as they are there as long as I can stand it, and although it is very humiliating, I have come to you. I don't know what they did to you the day you left the camp, beyond stealing your food, but I know that they were capable of doing anything; for the fact is, the Commodore is little short of a brute. He rules and directs and orders the whole of us around, and Herbert and I have to do all the work. He sits with the air of a proprietor and takes the best of all that is provided, and grumbles because it is not better, but provides nothing himself. I have brought nearly

every stick of wood to the camp that has been brought since you left. I have killed every kid that has been eaten except two, and the cooking and preparing have nearly all fallen to my lot. I don't so much mind the work, but I hate to be ordered about as if it were my duty to do it. Then, when it is all done, it is tough living. We have not rice enough to carry us through until next year's crop, and if we have to stay on the island another two or three months, we will be without it. While the weather was fine we were not so badly off, but now it is very disagreeable. The women never having had to cook or keep house don't know how to do anything, and we have a strange time of it. Then our clothes. Look at mine. The rest are as bad, and the women are no better off. We don't know how to tan the skins, nor how to make the clothes if the skins were tanned. The fact is, I don't know what we can do unless we go naked. You must help me, and let me come to you. I cannot stand it any longer, and I would rather be your servant than the Commadore's."

"Charlie, I feel sorry for you and I feel sorry for the women; but I can do nothing for you. Three times have I left you and I have never gone back. Each time you have followed me up and each time entirely from selfish motives. Had I been dying or starving, not one of you would have turned a hand to help me. I never needed your help but once, and then through risking my life to save yours, and while I lay at the bottom of the cliff where we landed none of you turned to help me. When I lay in the little

gully nearly dead you all robbed me of my food and drink, and the Commodore brutally assaulted me. Not one of you had a sympathizing word to speak to me. When you were lame from your cut and the others were sick, and you found that I had procured shelter and food, and could be used to serve you, you all came to my hut, and I waited on you and nursed you back to health; but not one of you stood by me as against the abuse of the Commodore. When you came to me, where your camp now stands, and begged me to go and help nurse the whole company, I extorted promises as to the future, for I mistrusted you all. I then went and helped you and afterward built you houses and brought you to my camp. How did you keep your promises? You all imposed on me, made a lackey of me, refused me the pleasure of the only society that this lonely island affords, and the Commodore and Herbert finished it by robbing and beating me in a most brutal way. You have all proved yourselves haughty, ungrateful and cruel. No, I will never put myself in your power again. You were all angry when the Captain of the 'Watch-word' put me into your boat; had he not done so, your company would have been on this island without me. Now imagine that I was not in your boat, that I am not on the island, that your company of five were all that landed, and set to and do as you would then have done. There is no reason why you should not do as well as I. Everything is as much at your service as it is at mine. Go back and make the best of it. I am now living in peace; to allow any of you

to come to me would lay a sure foundation for the destruction of that peace. I cannot afford to have my quiet way of getting along broken up, and I am not willing to make any more sacrifices. I will be glad to have you visit me whenever you please, and I will gladly show you how to do anything that you don't understand."

Charlie sat looking at the ground, a picture of misery, with his long, uncombed hair hanging over his shoulder, and with his dirty, ragged clothing hanging on his emaciated frame. It was some time before he could control himself to speak. Then rising to go, he said, "It was a bitter pill to swallow to come and ask you, but it is swallowed, and it is bitterer in the belly than it was in the mouth. I will say farewell; it is the last time I will so humble myself."

I replied as cheerily as possible, "Cheer up a bit, Charlie, and things will not look as black as they do now."

Charlie never turned to look back as he strode away and was soon lost to sight amongst the trees and bushes. I sat and looked after his retreating figure for how long I do not know, before I could begin to think. Then I questioned myself whether I had done right in refusing to let him come, and I believe my conscience approved of my action. Had he shown himself considerate toward me at the old camp, he would have helped me in every possible way, and in every work that I undertook for the service of the company. I felt sure that in his heart he was willing to do this, but was influenced by the Commadore, who

no doubt discouraged him as well as the others from either helping me or associating with me. The Commodore's opinion of me was that I was born a servant, and so must be kept a servant and not allowed to get above my position, by either familiarity or relaxation of discipline. The others may have shared this opinion, but if they did not voluntarily reach the same conclusion, they were sufficiently influenced by the stronger mind of the Commodore to accept of it. I imagined I could always hear in the ladies' voices and see in their manner toward me that patronizing air that would say, "Now there is a good fellow," and it used to make me grate my teeth.

When I found that the entire company had reached the point that as their servant it was my duty to do all the work, and allow them to enjoy all the comfort, I decided that the time had come to strike; and the failure of the men to help me to move the logs to build my house, was the last straw in the burden. I was glad to be away from them, and I determined that no matter what came I would not again place myself in bondage.

On the night following Charlie's visit to me there set in a storm that continued almost without cessation for six days. It rained almost continuously, and blew more or less violently all the while. Sometimes the rain would subside to a drizzle and then for a few hours it would almost cease, giving hope of clearing, but scudding clouds would fly ominously across the sky and presently would send down their contents in drifting torrents. The roar of the sea was like perpet-

ual thunder, and the very island seemed to rock with the terrific force of the waves. I was kept inside my house almost the whole of the time, and was greatly put about to know what to do to drive away that terrible feeling of loneliness that would creep over me. I regretted that I had not allowed Charlie to come to me; he would have helped me keep up my courage, which was all but exhausted. Several times I found a refractory tear standing in my eye.

The goats gathered in their pen and stamped and bleated and pushed each other, scarcely going out long enough to feed. They had made some acquaintances amongst the wild goats, and these often came around and fed with them and sometimes entered their pen, but always kept at a distance when I was moving about, although they were not greatly afraid of me. After the storm had raged for a couple of days, these wild goats came to the camp and took possession of a part of the pen, and made themselves so much at home that they soon crowded it so full that my goats—having become partly civilized, gentler in their manners, and not so persistent—were actually crowded out. Then I would interfere, and at my near approach, these wild ones would scamper off a few rods, turn and look at me, and bleat impatiently until I returned to my house and then would rush back to the shelter, and very soon my goats would be bleating at my door. I did not wish to frighten the wild goats, as I thought it would be well to tame them and add some to my dairy, so in dispossessing them I did it with as much gentleness as possible. They found that I had no inten-

tion of hurting them, and some of them soon refused to leave at my approach. I determined, as soon as the storm subsided, to enlarge my shed accommodations and let them all take up their quarters in the pen. This I did, and some of them never left me. Wherever they might roam to during the day night was sure to bring them back to the fold. Some of them became very tame, others were wilder; but none of them were so wild that I could not at any time have caught them with a noose or lasso.

During the prolonged storm, I began to try to invent a spinner and loom, with which to convert the wild hemp into cloth, out of which to make clothing for myself and the ladies—for I felt particularly sorry that they should lack clothing—even though they deserved nothing from me. This was no easy matter, for I never saw spinning or weaving done, except once or twice when I had visited large factories. I had taken no particular notice of the mechanical work, and so I retained very imperfect ideas of how it was done. I thought of many plans, some of which seemed practicable enough, if I had had the tools to carry out the designs; others lacked the probabilities of success and had to be abandoned. I finally thought of the crochet hook; why had I not thought of this before. I could easily make one of hard wood with my pocket-knife, or better still, I could cut one out of the gambрил sinew of a goat, and when thoroughly dried, it would wear well, and no doubt work well. I could spin the hemp with my fingers and hook it in as I twisted it, and although it would be an exceedingly

slow process, that would not matter, as it would give me employment, and help to pass the time that hung so heavily on my hands, especially in bad weather. The goat-sinew hook could not be made and ready for some time, but the wooden one could be made in a few minutes, so I set to work, and it was not very long before I had started to weave, or hook, or crochet a shirt.

I don't know that I shall succeed in describing very intelligently how I did it. I began at the back of the neck, and made a chain that would reach half way around the neck, then every row I would widen it a stitch at either end, and kept on in this way until when it was about three inches wide it would reach from the tip of one shoulder to the tip of the other, and make a sort of yoke covering the back of my neck. I then kept it at that width until it was wide enough to reach a few inches below my shoulders. I then made two half yokes for the front, corresponding with the one for the back, and when they were finished I hooked the tops together on the shoulders, fastened the front half yokes together at the bottom corners and the front and back yokes together under the arms. I now had the upper part of my garment complete, except the collar, and I set to work to make the body, after which the sleeves and collar would finish it up.

This was not a very large thing that I looked at with so much pride at the end of about four days' steady work, but it was an earnest of what was to be done. A woman accustomed to work of this kind would have done it all in a few hours; but then I had

yet to become handy at my work, and I had also to spin and put the twist into my hemp yarn, besides which I was kept constantly picking out the little pieces of woody fibre from the yarn. The garment would feel rough enough at best, but if these sharp little pieces were left in, it would be little less than torture to wear it; so I had to be very particular in this respect.

I put on this much of my garment over my goat-skin suit, pulled it together at the neck, cast my eye over my shoulder to discover the fit, and wished for a mirror. I presume that it was better that I did not possess a luxury of this kind, for so far as I could take it in with these glances, I was not greatly flattered; but what did it matter? This was the beginning of a new industry on the island, and one that was likely to grow and extend to the other settlement. I was its originator—its inventor and patentee—and I felt proud of it. What was to hinder the ladies from making and repairing their garments in this way? They surely understood how to use the hook or crochet needle, and it would give them employment, while it would clothe them, which was the most important consideration.

CHAPTER XVI.

A beautiful morning—A sail—My excitement—I wave wildly—Appearance of my fellow-captives—Our useless exertions—The sail fades away—Our despair.

THE storm had subsided, the morning opened beautifully, the sun rose rich and red, a cool gentle breeze was wafted across our little island and I felt like an uncaged bird. I must go out and take in the fresh air, have a look at the world and view the sea, the sound of whose waves, not yet stilled, could be heard on the shore. I took a hurried breakfast, and started out with axe and staff for my look-out. The sun was about an hour high, and the air was so clear that I almost imagined that I could see to the ends of the earth. I took a hurried look out to sea in every direction, but saw nothing. Then I stood taking a searching sweep, peering into the distance carefully, beginning in my search in the southeast and carrying it to the south and on to the west. Some trees cut off my view for a little, and then the clear sea was seen again to the west and northwest. As I was looking in a spot about west-northwest of where I was standing, my heart almost stood still. Could it be possible? No; it was but a sea fowl or a small cloud not larger

than a man's hand. A mist came over my eyes, I could not see. I wiped my eyes and looked again; it was still there. Surely it was a sail. If I were only on the large hill I could see more distinctly, as it would give me a range of more than one hundred feet higher than I had. I would not wait a moment. Starting on a run, I never stopped until I had reached my house. Hurriedly seizing two tanned goat skins and a pole that lay near by, I ran toward the mountain, as I called it. I tied the leg part of the skins together as I went, as fast as I could, for my breath was too much gone to run any further; then with some strings I tied the two corners of the skins to the pole, and long before I reached the top of the hill I had a flag fastened to a pole, ready to wave out in the morning sun.

Puffing, panting and perspiring, I began the ascent. What if, after all, it was not a sail? What if it were but a small white cloud hovering over the horizon? What if it were but a misty delusion gathered on my over-strained and anxious eyes? What if it were a sail and so far away that the ship's look-out could not see me? It would sail away and leave us to deeper despair! Why had I allowed myself to become so excited? The blood went rushing through my head until I could hear its flow most distinctly at every throb of my heart. I tried to collect myself and calm my feelings. I tried to argue that if it were a ship it could not get out of sight for some time, as the gentle wind now blowing could not carry it more than two or three knots an hour; but I did not succeed in over-

coming the excitement. Presently I reached a point on the hill-side where I could get a view of the sea. Yes! There it was still, a sail sure enough. I waved the flag above my head and ran for the hill-top. I fell and bruised myself; I sprang up and ran again. I fell again; I arose and waved the flag and shouted with all my strength. Then I began to try and think how I was acting. I could scarcely walk, so exhausted was I from real excitement. I made a firm resolve to be calm. At length I reached the top of the hill, more dead than alive. I stood and waved the flag. Then I thought that I might reach the highest point, so that my moving form would have the sky for a background. This I did, and waved my flag to and fro until I was nearly ready to faint. There was the sail, a little speck on the horizon, moving slowly southward, and I imagined receding from sight, although this might be only from the increasing light of day narrowing my vision.

Oh, how anxiously I watched that white speck! What a chill crept over me as I felt certain it was growing less visible! How I prayed for strength to wave my flag more vigorously! What a time of suspense! Who can conjure up to themselves the sensations that filled me and moved me between hope and fear?

I don't think that up to this moment I had given a thought to my companions. I don't believe there was room enough in my brain for another thought but the one that crowded all others out. I had no idea whether I had been five minutes or an hour waving



A SAIL IN SIGHT.



that flag on that hill, for I had not thought of time, when my attention was attracted by a noise near me, and puffing and panting, much as I had done, Charlie came rushing up to me, just able to gasp out, "A sail! A sail!" He partly sat down and partly fell on the rock at my feet.

By dint of will effort I was overcoming my excitement. This was becoming easier as I was becoming convinced that the sail was receding, and hope was beginning to die. I, however, continued to use all my strength in waving the flag to and fro, and kept my eye fixed on that small and diminishing white spot.

Charlie lay still, thoroughly exhausted for some time; perhaps he had fainted. I do not know; I had no time to think of him, so intent was I watching that sail. Presently I heard him ask, "Is she coming? Do they see us?" And then he cried out, "Oh, shout, shout loud. My God, I fear they do not see us! Wave the flag harder. Shout, shout with all your might." Then he lay down entirely overcome.

Herbert next made his appearance in a great state of excitement, and acted quite as incoherently as Charlie had done. The Commodore, with a face like the sun, came puffing up after Herbert. He could hardly breathe, his sides went out and in at each successive breath, causing his arms to move, until he appeared as if he were about to try to fly. Reaching us, he turned and took one look at the sail, and then turning to me, he forced out amidst froth and steam in a tone between a hiss and a grunt, "Here you, sir; wave that flag harder!" I stopped waving the flag

altogether and gave him a look of utmost scorn and contempt, but did not vouchsafe a single word. He saw that he had made a mistake, excited as he was, and turned and walked off to a little distance and sat down on a stone and looked at the sail.

These distractions of thought had the effect of cooling my brain; I was beginning to grow quite deliberate. I saw that the sail was slowly fading in the distance, moving in a southwesterly direction. I was convinced that we were not seen and that every moment made our chances less. I was in that state of hopelessness that I was in no humor for any conversation, much less for any crossing. A very little thing would have made me very angry, and I did not want anything to occur to cause a disturbance, so I neither made remark, nor noticed any of the remarks that were being made by the others, who had now begun to discuss matters.

They had not seen the sail before reaching the hill. Charlie, who was the first to turn out of bed in the morning, had looked toward the hill and seen me moving the flag, and felt sure that I had discovered a sail. He shouted to the others that there was a sail and that I was waving a flag on the hill, then ran with all his speed to where I was. The others had sprung from their beds and followed, and the ladies were coming as fast as their strength would allow. Of course, when they first saw the sail at such a great distance, and did not know whether it was approaching or receding, they were full of hope, which I did not wish to destroy. Not being in a state of mind to consider the

exercise that I had undergone within the past two hours, they thought I ought to make the flag go like the wings of a wind-mill. They could not understand why I was acting so leisurely. They had not seen my first efforts, nor had they seen the figure I cut in getting to the hill-top.

Each one on arriving wanted to do some ridiculous thing, just as I had done. The women waved their ragged handkerchiefs and shouted, so they could have been heard almost ten rods away. They both danced around and cried and tried to shout, until they both fell down completely overcome, and then cried and sobbed as if their hearts would break, and beat the air with their hands, making the most painful contortions of face and body. From pure sympathy I soon found the tears rolling freely down my cheeks. This softened the hard lump in my breast, and asking Charlie, who was now somewhat recovered, to take the flag and wave it, I went to them and tried to divert their attention. I was only partially successful; but I began to reason with them that the wind was very light and if the vessel were sailing straight for us it would take it several hours to reach us, and we would have plenty of time in which to get ready to leave the island. It was, however, so far away at present that it was not likely they would see us until they got nearer, for we would be quite invisible to the naked eye and unless they happened to turn a glass on us they would not discover us. Little by little the excessive excitement began to wear out, and then one after another would express the conviction that the sail was going away

from us. This helped to kill the excitement more than anything else. I had found this in my own case, and now that I realized that the ship was leaving us, my excitement was dead, and a lonely, sad, regretful feeling was taking its place. I knew that very soon this revulsion would take place in their minds, and I feared for the consequences, with the two women. They were nearly demented from the excitement—would not the consequent despair complete the work? Nothing but tears would save them. If they were at the house, a copious flow of tears followed by a sound sleep, would bring them around all right; but here on the hill, where they would persist in staying while the sail was in sight, and in the hot sun, I feared the consequences. So I advised, without avail, that they return and eat their breakfasts, and we would let them know if the ship changed its course in our direction.

The sun climbed higher and higher, and grew hotter and hotter as the speck of a sail grew smaller and smaller. At length, about eleven o'clock, those with weaker sight began to miss it altogether, and half an hour later none of us could discern a single speck of the canvas that had so filled us with hope a few hours earlier in the day.

Perhaps some of the mariners on that ship—should this fall under their eye—may remember sighting land on that beautiful morning, after that prolonged storm in the latitude of our lonely island. They little knew then the emotions of hope and despair the sight of their sail caused the little group of castaways.

The tears flowed from all our eyes. The women

gave way to wailing, and a more sorrowful or despairing company the world never saw. I rose slowly from the rock on which I was seated and gathered up my goat-skin flag and my pole, and in a subdued voice I bade them all good-by and began the descent. Turning to look, after going a short distance, I saw them in the act of preparing to leave. The women were being helped by the men, and by their demeanor I knew they were still weeping. I cast one sad glance at the sea and then started down the hill, my heart aching within me.

CHAPTER XVII.

After the excitement—The basin—Exploration—The cross on the grave—The button—My tailoring—Fishing with hook and line—Outwitted by a fish—Experience teaches.

ARRIVING at my camp, I took a drink of milk and at once retired to my bed, exhausted and sick at heart. It was some time before I could fall asleep, but I eventually succeeded, and when I awoke it was past four o'clock. I felt greatly rested and refreshed, although the effects of my great disappointment had not yet entirely left me.

I arose and bathed my face and head and took something to eat; but a restless feeling was upon me; and I could not settle down either to work or think, and so I strolled out toward the sea.

The south shore was precipitous and rocky, and as there was nothing to invite inspection along it, I never had the curiosity to examine it from any nearer point than the ridge, the highest point of which served me as my look-out. But to-day I was not guided by curi-

osity, necessity, nor so far as I can judge by any motive at all. My nerves had been strung to their utmost tension, and the relaxation left me restless and impatient. I wanted motion; but I did not want any object in my motion, and so I just strolled on leisurely, thoughtlessly and indifferently. I reached the precipitous rock that formed the abrupt shore of the island, and stood looking out to sea, not thinking of anything in particular. Then I started to walk along the broken brow of this rock. I had not gone far when I heard a sound of the sea as if beating under an overhanging rock or into a small cavern. Following this sound I soon came to a place where there was a crevice in the rock not more than eight feet wide at the outlet, but which widened to fully fifty feet further in, and was more than a hundred feet from the entrance to the back end. The water had worn out the sides below at the entrance or fissure to this cove, to more than twice the width that it was higher up and above the water mark. The fissure at the top of the rock was not more than three feet wide, and I could conveniently step across it. The rock ran down almost perpendicularly to this basin at the end next to the sea; but grew more sloping farther back. At the farther end it appeared as if the fissure extended back for some distance, gradually growing shallower and narrower to the top, forming a very convenient, but rough path down to the water's edge.

I walked around and examined this singular little basin thoroughly, for I thought it might be very useful to me in time to come. I had often wished for a

boat in which to go out to sea in calm weather and fish, and one of the difficulties that my calculations had met was how to launch it and where to keep it? This seemed to meet that difficulty, for although it would be impossible to go out through that narrow passage when the sea was rolling in, it would be easy enough when it was calm, and that was the only time I would ever want to go out. I had often thought of leaving the island in a boat of my own making, but before I would trust myself at sea in a boat, I would like to try its seagoing qualities well, and this little harbor would enable me to do this. I could draw my boat up the inclined fissure, at the end of the cove, out of the reach of the waves and leave it safely, and when I wanted to launch it, push it down into the comparatively still water. I looked upon this discovery as a very fortunate one. I had been within eighty rods of this place often, but had no idea of its existence.

I descended to the water's edge and looked down into its depths, and made out that the water was deeper inside the basin than it was at its mouth. I concluded there must be fish in its waters lying comfortably in its deep places in the shadows of the rocks, but they could only be caught by hook and line. How was I to conjure up this out of my scant stock of material? I would return to my camp and see if I could invent any plan for a hook. The line could be easily made out of my hemp.

The evening was drawing on when I returned to camp. I soon had my goats milked and my supper

eaten. Then I went to bed, after the most exciting experiences of my life. It was some time before I fell asleep; I lay speculating as to what I would do in reference to many things, but the only definite conclusion that I reached was to thoroughly explore every foot of the surface of the island, and see if anything could be found to contribute to our comforts. Up to within the last few weeks I had been so busy doing the many things that necessity demanded that I could not conveniently spare a moment to investigate our surroundings, but now I determined to spend a part of each day, when the weather would permit, in spying out every foot of land and examining all its productions. By and by I fell into a restless sleep; a sleep full of dreams of all fantastic kinds, but in most of which a rescuing party played a prominent part—always without success. At length the morning dawned; I turned out before the sun was up and soon had my morning work done and was ready for any undertaking that I might determine on for the day. I was still slightly under the influences of the excitement of yesterday, and was utterly unfit for any close application. I could not have worked on my shirt, or spun a line with which to catch fish, or made a fish-hook, or any such work, so I decided that it must either be a ramble or I must take my axe and extend my goat-pen. I finally decided to go to my look-out, and after having examined the sea carefully, “looking for a sail,” I would decide what to do.

I always carried my axe and a staff with me in my rambles, so that if I required them I would have them

convenient. So taking up these implements, I started for the look-out. There was nothing to be seen, so I strolled down to the cove I had discovered the previous day, and starting from that point, examined the shore carefully to the westward. I found the same irregular formation for fully a mile. In one place I discovered another cove, smaller and deeper at the mouth, and I found where the rock was undermined by the sea, and through a narrow crevice about fifty feet back from the shore, I could both hear and see, the water moving to and fro. I presume it was these and other places of the same sort, that made such a frightful sound when the sea was angry, and made me fancy sometimes that the island trembled.

It was approaching noon when I returned to my house, built a fire and cooked a good meal; which a good appetite helped me to despatch with zest.

"How shall I spend the rest of the day?" This was the question that I asked myself, and this is how I answered it: "I will go to the grave of the unknown and build a monument over it more enduring than the frail cross erected by his companions."

I left my camp in a straight line for the old hut on the west end of the island, and reached it in about half an hour. I found things exactly as I had left them. The little cross was as I had placed it over the grave, and the remains of the old hut as I had thrown them about. I carried stones and made a monument out of them about three feet high. I took my knife and cut rudely into the little cross on one side—

This Cross
was found
lying on this
grave, by one of a party of
six who were cast on this
island from the wreck of
the "Watch-
word." It
was re-
erected by
him as an
act of chris-
tian sympathy.

On the reverse side I cut in larger letters—

To the

memory of the

unknown

dead.

I planted this securely in the top of the stones and placed them against it in such a way that it could not possibly fall until rotted entirely away.

I then went to the site of the old hut and removed most of the remaining logs, and with a sharpened stick, scraped and hunted through the mould and

dirt to find, if even so much as a pin, what was left behind. I succeeded in finding an old horn button, such as I have seen sailors and navvies wear on their trousers. As these buttons are of English manufacture, I inferred that the men who spent some time on this island were English sailors. I continued my search, and was rewarded by finding a man's heavy, plain gold ring. On the inside the letters E. H. were engraved in a very rough way, as if done by an apprentice engraver. It was well worn, and had no doubt been the prized property of some hard-working mariner, who greatly deplored the loss.

Did they succeed in getting to some inhabited country? Are any of them alive at the present time? Will this ever meet the eye of any one of them or any one to whom their story has been told, and if so, will he recognize the spot where they spent their lonely months and buried their dead companion?

The day was now so far spent that I had to return to my camp, but determined to continue my search at a future time.

I slept better after this busy day, and arose to find the sky looking very threatening; so after breakfast I made an addition to my goat pen. Before it was finished a gale came on, and we had another siege of several days of bad weather, during which I worked away at my shirt and made very good progress.

When the weather was sufficiently calm for me to go out with comfort, I continued my explorations, but discovered nothing of particular interest to me along the whole south side of the island. In bad weather I

worked at my shirt until it was finished. I then commenced to make a pair of trousers. I was in no hurry with these things, for at this time of the year, when the weather was much cooler than in the summer, the goat-skin clothes were not so uncomfortable; but now that I was able to make them and had got them so far advanced, I would be prepared for the return of the dry season.

I had made a good strong line nearly fifty feet long, with which I intended to try to catch fish. The next thing to make was the hook. This taxed my ingenuity; at last I struck upon a plan that I thought favorable, and began at once to carry it out.

I took the small leg bone of a kid, and broke it off angling, and then rubbed it upon the stone I used to sharpen my axe upon, and ground it until the point was very sharp. I flattened it on the opposite side from the point near the other end, so that when this flat side was put against a reed, the sharp point would stand off at an angle of about twenty-five degrees. I got a piece of reed about a foot long and half an inch through. I flattened one side of the reed a little near one end, to correspond with the flat part of the bone, and cut little niches in the opposite side. I took a coarse-edged, flinty stone and rubbed corresponding niches in the outside of the bone, and then with strong, thin fibres of hemp, tied the bone firmly to the reed. This made quite a formidable hook; but it lacked a beard, which I was not able to add, consequently I expected that a good number of the fish that took it would succeed in getting off again before being

landed; still I hoped that once in a while one would be brought to shore. I fastened this reed very firmly upon the end of my line, caught a few small frogs for bait, and set out for the cove to try my tackle. I placed a frog on the hook, threw it into the water and let it sink. I was standing on the outside of the cove near the outlet, and between twenty and thirty feet above the water. The rock on which I stood projected over the water and I could see into it to a considerable depth.

I did not get a bite, and began to draw up slowly and watch it. Presently I saw several large fish swimming around and apparently investigating it. One of them would approach so close as to almost touch it with his nose, then move off; then another would try it, and act very much in the same way. I kept raising it higher and higher, and they followed it up. I was greatly interested in watching them. They evidently did not know whether frog was healthy fish food or not, for it is not likely any of them had ever tried it. By and by it reached the surface, and they watched it while it dangled in the air as I drew it up hand over hand. I coiled my line like a sailor, took the end in my hand and then swung out the bait to the full length of the line, and it went, with a chuck into the water and sank. I began again to slowly draw it in, and intently watch the fish. One of them took a careful hold of the bait, when another larger one moved up hurriedly, in a threatening way, as much as to say, "Hold, there; if that is good to eat I will take it myself." The first fish swam away quickly,

and the larger one took a circuit around, as much as to say to the others, "Now all of you stand back and see how I will devour this new kind of food." He gave a whirl and a dart, and caught the bait and devoured it at a gulp. I gave a slight pull on the line, and I presumed his conscience hurt him for not sharing such a dainty morsel with the others, for I saw a flash, and before I could stir to rescue the end of my line there was a whish on the edge of the rock and the line was gone.

I stood and looked into the pool for some time in astonishment and then said, "What a fool I am."

I had got so interested in watching the fish in their careful manner of investigating the bait, that I had entirely forgotten to fasten the end of the line to my hand. Then I thought again, perhaps it is for the best, for if I had had the line fastened to my hand, and been leaning over the rock as I was doing, that immense fish would certainly have drawn me in. The fall to the water would have stunned me, and I would have fed the fishes instead of the fishes feeding me.

I had learned several things that were of service to me, and I felt that I had only paid for my learning. This is what everybody has to do in this world. I had learned how to make a hook and line, that there were fish in the cove, that frogs would do for bait, and that if I would land them I must take better care.

I returned to my house and set to work to make another line and hook. This time my line must be at least seventy feet long, then I would tie the end to the middle of a strong stick, which I would lay on the

rock at some distance from the brink and pile some stones on and in front of it, so that it would be impossible to pull it away. I would also make a stronger line and a larger hook, and bait with larger frogs, for some of the fish were larger than I had expected to find.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Portentous signs — The storm — My experience — Investigating the damage — Herbert's story of disaster — Ruin at the old camp — The sufferers — Mrs. Travers' request — Rebuilding the house.

THE night was coming on, and the sky was assuming a strange hue and looked to me as if a storm was brewing. The frogs croaked in the swamp more than I had ever heard them before, and the bleating of the wild goats could be distinctly heard in the distance. My own goats were restless and followed me every step I took about the place. I could not have told why, but I had a sort of foreboding of evil, and I thought several times over whether everything about the place was perfectly secure. I did not feel afraid, but some unaccountably strange feeling possessed me. I put stones on top of the sods that I covered my fire with, and in passing the goat shed I shook it to see if it was perfectly secure in case of a violent storm. I carried a number of stones and laid them on top of it to give it solidity. I felt that everything was as secure as I could make it. All my work for the evening was done before the regular time, and I sat down outside the house to wait for the gathering darkness.

The moon was just climbing above the big hill, and I sat watching it. How strange it looked. Such an indescribable red it almost frightened me. It seemed almost to say, "I am coming full of terror and woe." Then I began to think of my companions. I had not seen any of them since we had parted in great disappointment on the hill. Perhaps the reaction had been too much for them and something had gone wrong at their camp. Something seemed to speak to me and say, "They are in great trouble there." I had vowed that I would never go to them unasked; but had it not been for the lateness of the hour, I would have gone at once and broken my vow. The moon looked more ominous every minute, and the bleating of the goats was coming nearer, until at length they began to arrive at my camp and take possession of the pen. I felt sure their instincts were driving them to shelter from some approaching storm of more than an ordinary character. Presently the pen with its new addition was full, and other goats that were too wild to come near, stood in the distance. By and by they moved on eastward, and I began to wonder where they were going, when I thought of the large hill. If they were on the east side of this and a great storm should come, it would afford them shelter. I could hear the bleating of the goats on the north side of the swamp, as they were evidently moving in the same direction and for the same purpose. There certainly was a storm coming, such as we had not experienced. Were we prepared for it?

Then I thought of all the fallen trees on the island,

and they told a tale of storms in the past. If we should have another such as the one that had torn all these trees down, our houses would not stand before it. Then for the first time I thought of the west verandah to the houses at the other camp, and almost trembled. Why did I not think of the possibility of these violent storms in the "hurricane season," as it is called in that part of the world?

I had cut all the larger trees within a few rods of my house for building material; but I had left an abundance of shade trees up to thirty or forty feet high. These grew all around the house, so that I could sit in their shade at any time of day. If they were blown down they could do no harm, and my house would stand anything short of an earthquake. Perhaps, I thought, it is an earthquake that is approaching; but it was not likely, as the goats were seeking shelter.

It was now quite dusk, and the goats had got out of hearing; those in the pen kept stamping, bleating and pushing around restlessly. My own goats had joined them in the pen; but none of them seemed disposed to rest.

I tried to compose myself and go to bed, and tried to argue with myself that there was no certainty of a storm coming, and if a storm, that there was no probability of such a one as I feared; but I could not allay the feeling, so I decided to sit where I was for some time and await developments. The moon looked more and more strange, and the air lost none of its deathlike stillness and ominous haziness.

It must have been near midnight—as the moon, nearly at its full, was in midsky—when I fancied I heard a roaring noise like distant thunder, which seemed to increase. I had been sitting beside the door on the east side of the house, and I sprang up and stepped beyond the corner to the north and listened. My hair fairly rose on end. There came out of the far west the most awful roar that ever saluted my ears. It seemed to me as if the approaching storm would uproot the very hills. There was no help for it. I stepped back into my house and opened the door wide, and put a block that I used for a seat against it; then I took my stand just inside this open door, ready to spring out if the house began to yield, and far enough in to be safe from the storm, if it stood the shock.

I was not particularly afraid of death at any time, but that storm was filling me with the utmost terror. I trembled and my teeth chattered. Nearer and nearer came that terrible roar. That villainously red moon seemed to wear a demoniacal grin, and I fairly fainted with fright at the sight of it.

Words can no more describe the blow that struck my house than they could the crash of a world. I only know that the house seemed to have been leveled to the ground. The confusion of sounds so blended that they seemed one terrific clap of thunder. I have a faint recollection of seeing stones flying and a feeling that the house had fallen on me. When I became conscious I found myself on my hands and knees, my hands on the ground outside the door and knees

inside. The roar was still terrific. The wind filled my house through the narrow windows and interstices between the unmortared stones, until I felt sure the west end must have blown in. The rain was falling in torrents and driving through the house in a cloud of mist. I was a long time in realizing just where I was, and what was the matter. At length I drew myself upon my feet, and started to find out how the wind and water got into the house. I speedily discovered that it all came in through the narrow windows and between the stones, and that great as the shock had been my house had stood it pretty well. What struck me and knocked me senseless I could never find out; but I suppose it was fear, imagination and the wind from the windows combined. Perhaps if I had had my door shut it would not have done it. I felt very silly when I was forced to conclude that I had been knocked senseless by the wind.

The storm raged for a long time, I should judge for a couple of hours, and then began to subside; the wind continuing to blow pretty strong for some hours longer.

The day dawned, and I began to move about, to take an inventory of the damage done. The east parapet was blown off my house. Probably the stones came down with a crash at the same time I did. The stones from the west parapet were scattered over the roof. It was no doubt the sound of these falling on the bark roof that made such a terrific noise, and gave me the impression that the house had fallen. By falling on the roof as they did, they helped to prevent the

roof yielding to the wind. Beyond this the house was unhurt. The rain had beaten into my store room between the stones, and had wet part of my rice and tea, that happened to be uncovered, and some of my other food. These would have to be brought out and dried.

Outside, the goat pen had suffered. The new part that I had built had partly collapsed, and pinned four or five goats fast, either killing them outright or maiming them so that it became necessary for me to kill them to put them out of their misery. My own goats had got into the old pen, which fortunately stood directly in the lee of the house, thereby escaping somewhat the violence of the storm, and by the help of the stones that I had laid on top of it, it was able to weather the shock. My fire was out, completely washed away. The larger trees of the island were mowed down like straw before a reaper; not one of them was left standing as far as I could see. The smaller ones were badly stripped of their branches, which strewed the ground in every direction. The storm was the worst that I had ever heard of.

Although I had not slept a wink during the night, I had to begin at once to clear away the wreck. I soon despatched the wounded goats, and laid five bodies side by side to be skinned. I made some dry kindling and soon had the fire going again, and water warming for the tea. I took a hurried breakfast, expecting every minute to receive a visit from the other camp, and I wanted to be able to start, in case of distress, to help them. I dare hardly think of them,

for I could not see how it was possible for them to have escaped. If no word reached me by the time my breakfast was over, I would go to them. What if they were all killed—a not impossible thing—and there was no one left to bring me word? Or some of them might be wounded and pinned fast by the fallen logs of their house. I got so nervous that I stopped before I was half through my breakfast and began to pack up something to take to them. Milk, cheese, rice boiled in milk and a few dainties, were put into convenient form for carrying, and I was about to start when I heard a step outside, and Herbert appeared at the door. He looked very pale and haggard and could scarcely speak, so in the kindest tone that I could command, I said, “Well, how did you folks fare in last night’s storm? I fear badly. I could not rest thinking of you, and was just prepared to start over to inquire.”

“It was fearful, and the wonder is, that we are not all dead. Our house is leveled to the ground; the Commodore is hurt very badly, and perhaps fatally; Charlie is wounded, and I am bruised. As for the ladies, I would not be surprised if neither of them survives, although I cannot make out that either of them is wounded seriously; but the fright and the exposure has so prostrated them, that they cannot sit up, and they have no place to lie down, except on the damp ground.”

I gave him some of my parcels to carry, and going to the fire I took out a couple of brands, and taking my axe, we started as fast as possible for the camp.

Reaching there, I started a fire at once and put on water to heat. I then went to the prostrate house and threw some of the logs away from where the bedsteads were, and going to some trees I soon secured enough small branches to make a soft bed. I went to the women, and taking one at a time, carried them carefully and laid them on the bed. I then gave them each a drink of milk, and cutting a thick bush for each, placed it so as to shade the sun from them. The water was boiling, and I set some tea to steep, and as soon as it was done I made Herbert give them each a drink, while I fixed up a comfortable bed for both Charlie and the Commodore. I got Herbert to feed them, and place bushes over them for shade, and I replaced the logs that had blown down over the heads of the women.

The first blow of the wind had lifted the roofs clear off the houses, and some of the troughs that formed the roof were blown ten rods distant. Then the top logs had followed and had blown in all directions, some falling in the house and some outside. How any of them escaped death is what I could not comprehend. Each of the women was bruised in different places by the falling timber, but no bones were broken. It appeared that when the storm struck the house, they were in bed, but not asleep; for they heard the roaring of the wind, but did not appreciate their danger. The first gust lifted the roof and upper logs clean, and blew them off. The frightened ladies started for the door, thus moving with the moving timber, and the lower logs came rolling after and against

them, bruising them as their wounds showed. The east end of the house having blown down, stopped their exit, and they crouched down under the fallen timber, and any that followed, rolled over them without touching them.

The men did much the same; but one of the falling logs struck the Commodore on the shoulder and broke it, and another struck him in the side knocking him under the logs, where he lay till the fury of the gale had abated. How Charlie escaped is a miracle, for he was surrounded and covered with timber. One of his legs was very badly bruised, and he had several bruises on different parts of his body. They had been trying to keep up a fire nearer to the house than where my old furnace was, and Herbert, hearing the storm coming, had hurried out to fix stone around it. He had not time to return, and was blown from his feet, and lay flat on the earth unable to rise until the greatest fury was past. Thus he escaped without anything more serious than a few slight bruises.

I told Herbert to get clay and water and poultice all the bruises and I would rebuild the houses. The logs out of which the houses were built were very dry, and I was in much better health than when I first built them up. I worked with a will, and before noon had them both higher than my head. I suggested that it would be just as well not to make them so high as they were before by two logs, and this they consented to.

We all took our dinners from the provisions I had brought over, and then Herbert and I put the roofs on

again and had them quite into shape before night. I never saw Herbert work so willingly or so well. He did whatever I suggested without a murmur and did it quickly and with a will, and the work progressed most satisfactorily.

Instead of extending the roof to the west as before we extended it to the east, and I told them I would show them how to fix their houses, so that a like catastrophe would not occur again.

I told Herbert to spread his rice and tea to dry, or it would be spoiled, and seeing them all as comfortable as possible, I prepared to leave, promising to return and help them the next day.

Before I left Mrs. Travers called me to her side and said, "You see we cannot live in this way and in this house; will you let us come to you? I know that I am asking a great deal and infinitely more than we deserve, but we are near the end of things. You see our clothes, and you must have some idea of the kind of food we have. We are more dead than alive and will very soon be dead indeed if something is not done. Do put up with us, and my niece and I will do the best we can to make things agreeable for you. I think these refractory men will listen to reason from us."

"Mrs. Travers, none of you are in a condition to change now, and when you are I will see what can be done to make your lot less hard. But some feasible plan will have to be adopted and carried out by all of us, and it will be necessary to talk it over. Let things remain as they are for the present and I will for a time bring you better food than you have been accus-

tomed to, and you will get better. I will return to-morrow and help you, and when you are all right again we will discuss the future."

I took my axe and started for home, and as I passed over the fallen dry trees, I thought that the storm that we had witnessed was not the first of the kind that had visited the island. It taught me that in building, these storms must be taken into consideration, and it increased my desire to leave the island.

I reached home, and as soon as I could get my supper I went to bed and slept soundly until morning. I laid out my damp provisions to dry, and packed up what I could carry to take to the hospital for the wounded. My goats gave very little milk, and I was thinking seriously about letting them go unmilked; but this accident led me to decide to milk them for a few days longer. So taking what milk I could get with me, I started out with a stock of provisions sufficient to last them two or three days.

After reaching their camp and getting them all fed, I cut long poles and laid them one end on the ground, about twelve feet from the west side of the house, and leaned the other end upon a pole put across the roof with props under it at each end on the ground and short props under it between these and the ridge standing on the roof. I placed eight poles in this leaning position, and then cut other poles and laid them on these until the whole was covered from the ground to the roof. Short props under the string pieces enabled them to hold the weight safely. I then showed Herbert how to build a dry stone wall at each end and

cover these poles over with a layer of flat stones. I told him that when he had done this I would warrant his house to stand any wind that ever blew from the west, if he would also lay a number of stones on the roof to give it solidity.

The women were doing very nicely, and Charlie had attended to his bruises faithfully. The Commodore was very restless and taxed Herbert's patience to the utmost; but Herbert was doing very much better than I ever expected him to do. The shock that the storm had given him did more to bring him to his senses than anything else could have done.

I left for home, promising to return the day after the next, as I had some work to do at home that would require one day's attention. They all seemed disappointed that I was not going to return the next day; but I determined that they should learn to depend upon their own efforts more than they were inclined to do.

CHAPTER XIX.

Progress of the invalids—My fish-lines—Friendlier relations—A visit from the ladies—Plans for the future—My responsibilities—The goat-paddock—My spinning-machine—The “Sailor’s Home.”

THE next morning I repaired my own house, and in the afternoon, put all the skins I had into ashes, and then gathered bark with which to tan them. Something had to be done to provide clothing for them all, and moccasins for their feet, and the skins would be needed for these purposes. The evening I spent at my fish line until it was so dark that I could not see to work longer. Rising the next morning I spent an hour at my line, and then breakfasted and started for the other camp. I found the women up and helping Herbert to dress the wounds of the two invalids. I was glad to see them so engaged and told them so, adding, “If you will try to help each other, you will find time fly much more rapidly, and you will be both happier and healthier. It is trying to do nothing and to get others to wait on you that allows you to brood over your troubles, and keeps you miserable. Try to fill up your time and you will feel much better.”

I found the women very anxious to discuss the plan

that I had spoken of for a change. I did not like to disappoint them, but told them I had not fully matured it yet myself. In a few days we would talk it over. While I was at the fire Mrs. Travers came to me and said, "Perhaps we did wrong to open that subject in the Commodore's presence. I did not think about that and I beg your pardon." I said, "That's it. When Charlie gets so that he can walk he will come over to my house with you and your niece, where I can say what I think."

Charlie's wounds were so much better that he got up and sat on a bench, and afterward walked a little with the aid of a staff. He said he would be much better in a few days. The Commodore was certainly very bad and would not be out again for some time. I saw that Herbert had done something toward placing the stones on the protection wall; and I told him I was glad to see it.

Before noon I returned home, and during the afternoon finished the line and hook and got ready for a trial next morning. While I was working at the hook and line I had the bark boiling over the fire, to be ready for tanning the skins, so that I was really doing two things at once. The tan liquor was now ready, and the hair was loosened on the skins, and I would soon have them completed.

Next morning I went with the line to the cove, and after fastening the end of the line as I had intended, I threw the hook. It was nearly half an hour before I got a bite, and I succeeded in landing a very fair-sized fish; but I had to carry him to the camp and

cut him open before I could get my hook out, he had swallowed it so far down.

I fried a portion of the fish for breakfast and the rest I fried to be taken to the other camp. I then took out the skins and stripped off the hair and put them to soak in clear water to take out the lye of the ashes. When this was done I started again to visit my neighbors, carrying the fish and other provisions.

I found Charlie outside exercising himself. Herbert was carrying stones and making his protection wall, and the women were outside keeping the others company. They were all anxious to have the protection completed as soon as possible, for fear another storm should come on them.

I turned in and helped Herbert for a couple of hours and then left for my own house to get my dinner. I told them I would not return again, as they were all getting on so nicely now. They regretted this; but the ladies said they would visit me as soon as Charlie was able to accompany them.

I had made myself perfectly free and friendly with all of them, except the Commodore. I had not spoken to him at all, but had directed Herbert in regard to the treatment he was to get. I thought I could not be so cruel as to make them feel that I was holding spite against them while they were in such unfortunate circumstances. They treated me with more civility and kindness than they had ever extended to me before; but I felt that their gratitude was of the kind described as a grateful recollection of favors to be received. While I was prepared to help them through

their difficulties—except giving them a start in the way of procuring clothing—I had no intention of allowing our relationship to change; but this they must learn later on.

I bade them good-by and returned to my camp and put the hides in tan. I then went out and spent the entire afternoon in gathering and carrying wild hemp to camp, and spreading it out to rot. I had gathered enough earlier on, to meet all my own wants; but I saw that I must supply the other camp with material for clothing.

The next day I spent in catching fish, fixing up my provisions which had now become thoroughly dry again, and in doing up a number of small jobs that required to be attended to. I got no word from the other camp.

The next morning, shortly after breakfast, Charlie came limping with a staff in each hand, accompanied by the two ladies. One would have thought they were visiting a museum of art and fancy work. They went through every part of my house and its surroundings, and admired everything; but when they came to examine my shirt and the material from which it was made, they outdid themselves in astonishment and praise. When I suggested that they could clothe themselves in this way, they were delighted with the idea and proposed starting work as soon as they returned to their house.

I had made two pairs of moccasins similar to those I had made for myself, only smaller, and these I brought out and presented each of the ladies with a

pair. Their thanks were profuse, and they could not wait to return home before trying them on. They went outside, and soon came back each as proud as a little girl with a new doll.

I showed them how I sewed the moccasins and skin clothes with a sharp bodkin made from a bone, with very thin strips cut from the skins for thread, and showed them a number of skins in tan, for future use. I also told them of my intention to make a spinner, that we would not have to twist the thread by hand, which was a very slow process. I pointed out the difficulty of getting the woody fibre clean out of the hemp, and many other things that pertained to the work that we had to do.

When we got through talking over the work that had to be done to clothe the company, I entertained them for a time, by telling them of some of my experiences. The mishap with the fish line amused them greatly; but the story of the hut and grave made them sad. They examined the ring and button, and agreed with me that the castaways must have been English sailors. They expressed a great desire to visit the spot, and it was finally agreed that some fine day, not far distant, when Charlie should have got entirely over his lameness, they would come to me early in the morning, and we four would picnic on the spot and make a further examination of the grounds.

They were very eager to begin to discuss the future. Mrs. Travers asked me to come to the point, as she was anxious to know what plans I had. I said my plans were very few, and having seen my proposals in

the way of procuring clothing, I thought there was little else to mention. But one thing it would be well to settle at once, and that was, should we endeavor to leave the island in a boat of our own construction? If we decided to do this, I would begin at once to construct a boat, and be ready to start when the fair weather season set in. If we decided to remain on the island, or rather if they decided to do so, I would prepare a means of making clothing and getting things in order before I left; for I had determined to risk it, and if I went alone I could send a ship to rescue them if I got safe to an inhabited land. If I failed and made my bed in the sea, they would be no worse off than they now were. Both the ladies declared that they would rather live to old age and die on the island, than risk themselves at sea in a small boat. I suggested that if we had two boats built, we could go three in a boat, and the chances were two out of three in our favor, if we started in the best weather. I had said that I would not turn a hand to save the Commodore; but I would so far take that back, that I would help to build a boat for him to manage. I had been thinking that I could make a boat out of reeds, that would float if filled with water, and which would right itself if turned over; I thought we could scarcely be lost from such a craft. At any rate, I was seriously considering the question of trying it, and if I must go alone, then alone I would go.

Charlie seemed to be as much afraid of the water as the ladies, and so I said, "Well, then, it may be considered a settled point, that you do not go until you are

rescued by a ship. As that may take place to-morrow, and may not take place for twenty years, it will be well for us to act as if we were sure it would be at the last-mentioned date, and begin at once to make provisions for a permanent stay where we are."

They all thought it better to provide for a prolonged stay, so I said, "Then listen to what I propose. The men will have to provide for you ladies a house and provisions. Let them fit up your house with a few more comforts, chink up the cracks as high as your heads, build a furnace of stones close to the house for cooking and make as many conveniences and comforts as possible. You will have to provide the men and yourselves with clothing. I will make a spinner as soon as I can, and in the meantime you can do as I have done in making my shirt. I will get up a loom with which to weave in the future, but the hook will do for the present. Charlie can be carrier and messenger between us, and you can come with him whenever you desire to see me personally about anything. Try to make your lives as comfortable as you can, for anxiety will not bring the rescuing ship any sooner. Now if you will excuse me I will prepare some dinner for you before you return."

My fire was burning brightly, the water was boiling and the frying stone was hot, so it did not take me long to spread before them a dinner of fried fish, warmed kid, rice boiled in milk, rice cakes baked dry to take the place of bread, and buttered with good butter, curd-cheese that had got an edge to it, and a cup of tea to wash it all down. I spread these on my two

tables, and the two ladies sat at one and Charlie and I at the other. I think they enjoyed their meal, if their words were any indication of their thoughts, and as their appetites endorsed the sentiments that they expressed I took it for granted. I know that I enjoyed their society, although I could not entirely forget their treatment of me in the past.

Shortly after dinner my company left, carrying with them hemp for clothes, skins enough for two pairs of moccasins, two hooks whittled from hard wood, with which to make the hemp into clothes, and some dainties such as I had prepared for the table. They were in better humor toward me than they had ever been, and promised to return often and learn how to work out the several plans that we had discussed.

The storm and its consequences had entirely changed my programme. Instead of exploring the island and taking things easy, as I had intended to do, I had engaged to provide the women with hemp for clothing, to build some kind of a spinner, and follow that with a loom for weaving. Then it was evident that I should have to assist them more or less, either directly or indirectly, in providing food. I saw how much they lost by not having milk and its products, and thought it wise to capture enough goats that we might have plenty for all. To do this I should have to build a place into which I could put the wild goats to get them thoroughly tame. Every night the wild goats came to the pen and stayed with my tame ones; but as much as I had tried to make friends with them they would not allow me to handle them. I found it would be neces-

sary to get them imprisoned and handle them by force until they found that I was not going to hurt them, and then, little by little, I would be able to win their confidence, and by the time they would give milk—which would not now be many weeks—I would have them well in hand.

I built a good large pen with an opening into it out of the shed in which they lodged. Then I fixed the front of the open shed so I could close it in a minute, and at night when they were sleeping in the shed, I slipped quietly up to it, closed the front and left them to find themselves penned in in the morning.

They were very restless when I got up. I brought them a feed of grass, and then climbed into the pen and closed the entrance to the shed. I caught the male goats one after another and passed them through into the shed, closing the entrance after them each time. I then took out the old-looking ewes in the same way, and when I had selected the best of the flock, I had—with my three tame ones—fourteen very promising goats. Two or three times a day I entered the pen, always with salt or some dainty of which they were fond, and spent some time in caressing them until they were all quite tame.

My ingenuity was taxed to the utmost how to spin my hemp, and every spare hour I was thinking how it could be done. I made a break by cutting out pieces of wood about one and a half inches thick, four inches wide and about three feet long. I champered off the two edges of one side and laid six of them beside each other with the champered edges up, and fastened

them together with a pin through each end, through holes that I burned with a hot iron. I put little pieces between the ends of each two to hold them slightly apart, and fastened them to the flattened side of a log, with the wood cut away from under the middle part, to let the broken fibre fall through. I then made another with five pieces. The two outside pieces I made longer and fastened them to a limb of the log, a couple of feet to one end of the break, with a wooden pin on which they worked loosely. When I would bring this upper break down upon the lower one, the champered edges of the one would just fit into the grooves of the other. By laying the hemp across the bottom and striking the upper one down upon it, the edges would break the fibre. A handle fixed to the upper one, enabled me to lift it conveniently, and working this with my right hand and handling the hemp with the left, I pushed it back and forth across the bottom one, and pounded the fibre to pieces with the upper one. It did its work very well, and when Charlie and the ladies saw me working it and the results of the operation, they were greatly pleased.

The next thing required was some means of hackling the hemp. For this purpose I made a hackle out of small reeds, with sharpened points put through holes burned through a thin piece of wood. I split and flattened both sides of a piece of wood about four feet long and eight inches wide, to a little more than one inch in thickness. I took the iron and drew the point for some two inches to about a quarter of an inch

thickness, and then sharpened the extreme end. I then burned forty-six holes through one end of the piece of flattened wood in rows at regular distances of about one inch apart, alternating the next row to come between them, and so on until I had a square of about seven inches. I put the sharpened reeds through these holes about three inches. Laying the other end of this on a seat and sitting on it to keep it solid, I would take a handful of the broken hemp and striking it down into these reed teeth, draw it through, or comb it. The pieces of broken fibre would in time all come out and the hemp would assume a soft, pliable form. How astonished the ladies were when they saw what I produced with my break and hackle!

The spinner had taken shape in my brain, but would require some time to complete it; so twisting with the fingers was still being carried on. The ladies had made such progress that they each had a suit of hemp, and were prepared to take a trip around the island dressed in what at home would have been called very coarse bagging, and moccasins on their feet. It was decided that the first fine day, and they were growing more numerous, now that the rainy season was nearly over, we would go to the old hut at the west end. I named it the "Sailors' Home."

CHAPTER XX.

Our picnic—The lonely grave—What became of the survivors?—The changing coast—Work—Constructing a big spinner—Failure and success—My first thread.

THE next day bade fair to be fine, and Charlie and the two ladies were at my camp bright and early, as eager to get off as if they were going to meet some gay company and have a day's outing. We packed up plenty to eat and drink and started for our picnic grounds. I carried my axe and part of the food and Charlie carried the rest of the food. It was not more than nine o'clock when we reached the old hut. The ladies visited the grave first and shed a tear over it. Ladies always like to visit cemeteries, and cry at unknown graves; but I felt that there was great excuse for those two women on this occasion. Death is a solemn thing to contemplate even when surrounded by one's friends; but death on a lonely island, far away from the world and alone, is supremely sad. A grave where no human footstep wakes an echo, where no kind hand plants a flower, where even the small bird's song breaks not the death-like

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stillness, where the angry sea alone holds sway, and its thundering voice alone is heard on the air—this is a solemn, dreary thought. That such was to be the lot of some, if not all of us, was probable. How, then, could they visit this lonely grave without having stirred within them the thought that this would likely be their lot, and that they might never again see their loved ones and their home. I confess to a very large lump in my own throat at the time, and—well, I think the breeze from the sea must have affected my eyes, for they felt very watery just then. Charlie and I went on to the old hut and left the ladies beside the grave. We put our provisions under a bush away from the direct rays of the sun, and set about searching for traces that would give a definite idea of the character of the castaways who had for a short time inhabited the island in the past, and kindly left us their goats. I said to Charlie, that if these men went to sea in a boat of their own make, they built that boat on this shore and the chips would still remain. If they went in a ship that called and rescued them, or if they went in a ship's boat there would be no chips, unless the boat had been repaired. We had better, therefore, search the ground entirely over, and see if there could be found any traces of ship carpentry. We did this very thoroughly and found nothing to warrant the belief that they built the vessel in which they left the island. We came to the conclusion that they remained on the island until the stormy season was past, and left in a ship's boat. I then went to the shore and along it for some distance, and peered into

the sea as far as my eyes could search, to find if any of the remains of a sunken ship could be discovered; but all in vain. If such had been the case it was so long ago that no trace remained within the possibility of my vision. The terrible sea, with its wash of years, had obliterated everything. We came to the conclusion that most likely a vessel had been driven on shore here during a storm, that some or all of its crew had got to shore and that they had built this hut and lived in it until the stormy season was past, and that they had then got away in the ship's boat. They would be able, if the ship did not go to pieces until the storm went down, to bring many things such as they would want, to the shore, and this they must have done; for, had they been short of provisions they would certainly have killed and devoured the goats.

We had spent the whole forenoon searching the ground over, but had made no discovery. We all sat down under the shade of a small tree—for the storm had left no large ones standing—and took our lunch. From where we sat we could see the shore and the ocean, and we speculated as to the former inhabitants of the island. I said, "Either that shore is moving inward or it is moving outward. I never knew a sandy shore in my life that was not either washing away or filling up. Now which is that doing? You see this break just in front of us where the sod on which we are sitting begins. From that to the high water mark is several rods. Sometime in the past the water must have reached this point; now it reaches it no more. Such storms as are experienced

in this latitude would drive the waves much higher than ordinarily; but you can see that the traces of the late storm did not reach this height. Now if this shore is filling at this point and that vessel was wrecked on it twenty years ago, it lies just about fifteen rods out, buried in the sand, if it did not go entirely to pieces. If I had a boat on a still day I would go all over the ground, and if there should be any part of it standing out of the sand I would see it. As soon as I can get time to build a boat I will do so, and we will then come back again and make a further search." Charlie thought I would probably find it so and said he would gladly accompany me.

After we had eaten our meal we spent some time in digging the ground over in the immediate vicinity of the old hut, with the points of sharpened sticks, but found nothing except a few very small cuttings of leather and part of a broken pocket-comb. We returned to our camp about four o'clock. The effects of the storm were everywhere visible, the large trees were all laid flat and the smaller ones denuded of a part of their limbs. There was practically nothing but a mass of fallen trees or brush, and it was very difficult making one's way through it.

Now for a few months of hard work. No more explorations or excursions; no more trying to kill time. The contracts I had entered into would require both my head and my hands for many weeks. So many weeks that it would be impossible for me to build a boat in time to leave the island, before another season's bad weather would be upon us, and that

meant another year lost. Perhaps it was better so; but somehow it was hard to see it in that light. However, it would never do to leave this helpless company on this island alone until I had some more practical ideas hammered into their heads, nor until they had got into a better way of feeding and clothing themselves.

Charlie was the only one I could endure to work with. He must come to me almost every day and learn how to work. He could break and hackle the hemp, while I worked at building the spinner and loom. He must learn to milk the goats, for in a very short time we would have this to do again. He must learn to tan leather and make soap, and chop with the axe, and several other things. Then the women must learn to spin and weave and sew, and provide the clothing for the company, and they must come with Charlie and take lessons. Then when all this was done and I had built my boat, I would take to sea and try to send deliverance to them. My faith in a rescue was very weak, for I did not believe that any ship in its regular course would come near us. The one that we had seen had evidently been driven out of its course during the storm that had prevailed for several days previously, consequently I had come to look upon our stay as permanent, except in the event of our taking to sea in a craft of our own.

Just a few feet to the north of my house stood a tree that had a heavy top and formed a beautiful shade in midday. The big storm had broken the top off just above the lower limb and left only a stub. I had

estimated the velocity that a spindle should have, to do any kind of rapid spinning, and found that I would require to have a wheel not less than six feet in diameter. Now this would have to work on an axle too high for me to use it while in a sitting posture, so I concluded that this stub would make a good stand for the wheel. I could put a peg into the stub and this would serve as an axle; then I must have a hub sufficiently long to keep the wheel from wobbling, or it would throw its belt. I would start at once to build the wheel, and the spindle must be made to work on a small tree about four feet to the west of this. I took my axe and cut a piece out of a tree about six inches in diameter, about six inches long, square at both ends. Then I shaped my burning iron tapering like a spindle and burnt a hole through the heart of this piece of wood as nearly straight as possible. I took a piece of very hard wood and made a spindle to fit that hole, projecting about an inch in front and six inches behind. I then burnt a hole through the stub, at right angles to where I wanted the wheel to hang. I then drove the axle into this hole in the stub and wedged it from behind. Making a button out of tough bark and fitting it on the axle in front of this hub, and tying some hemp in front to keep it on, completed the hub part of the spinner. Sixteen reeds the size of my thumb, all of the same length, made convenient spokes, and these driven into holes burned into the hub about an inch deep completed the wheel to the band. I found a tree that the wind had blown down, with a very thick and tough inside bark, and I stripped a piece of this

bark about twenty feet long, and half way around the tree; after shaving off with my axe the outside bark, I carried it to the camp and laid it flat on the ground, then took a hemp string and blackened it with charcoal and struck two lines lengthwise about five inches apart; and then with my knife I cut through it along these lines. This strip of bark I fastened with a peg driven through a hole cut in it into the hollow reeds. I then bent the bark over the ends of the spokes and fastened each spoke in the same way until I had compassed the whole wheel. The ends of the bark I lapped over and tied firmly together with hemp. The wheel was now done, and when tried on its axle ran sufficiently true to be able to retain its belt, which would be made of a hemp cord. Had an artist seen it he would have laughed heartily; but it was not built for artistic effect. I had spent three whole days at this job, and it would require two or three more to complete the twisting spindle.

The little tree in front was about three inches through. I took my axe and cut it off very square on top, about four feet from the ground, and flattened the two sides a little, so that when strips of wood were fastened on the flat sides, they would be in a straight line with the wheel. I pinned a piece of thin, flat wood on each side of this, and whittled a spindle with my knife out of very hard wood and fitted it to the further sides of those strips. The middle of the spindle I left about one inch in diameter, with a groove cut around it in the centre, to let the cord that was to run it work in. The back end I reduced to a pinion

about three-eighths of an inch thick, and long enough to bear clean across the strip of wood. The front or spinning end of the spindle I reduced to about the same size, but left it long enough to project between three and four inches past the wooden strip. I whittled the end of the spindle to a point and fitted a bark button on it against the strip. I took the hot iron and burnt a crease in each of these upright strips on the side away from the wheel, a short distance from the top. I then burnt holes into the strips to a little depth in these creases. I took strips of goat skin and put them around the bearings of the spindles and the ends into these holes and wedged them in tight with pegs made of wood, to prevent friction. I then oiled both the axle of the wheel and the bearings of the spindles with goat fat, then put on the hemp cord for a belt, tightened it up firmly and tried my wheel. The spindle flew like wild fire and the belt kept its place splendidly. The only question was the friction of the spindle; but after turning it for some time and feeling the bearings, I found them scarcely warm. I decided that the spinner, so far, was a success.

My next move was to try to spin. I brought out some hemp and wound the end of some of it on the spindle; but I must have been very awkward, for I could not get it to wind the twist into the thread. I worked for over an hour and gave it up, and sat down to study it out. Aha! I see through it now. The end of the thread of hemp must be fastened to the spindle. This could be done by letting the thread lap over its

own end and thus tighten itself; then the thread must be held at an angle that would allow it to fall off the spindle at each revolution, instead of winding up on the spindle. This would certainly put twist into it. "Here goes for another trial! All spinning is done with a revolving spindle and I will spin." Another trial was attended with better results. I fastened the hemp to the spindle as I had decided, about two inches from the end, and drew out a string of it about the right size to be twisted. I took hold of this thread about three feet from the spindle with my left hand, and turned the wheel slowly with my right; while I held my left hand so that the thread was at an angle of about forty-five degrees with the spindle. The thread fell off at every revolution, and a twist went into it. I turned a little faster; the twist was so hard that I could feel it turning under my fingers. Now what was I to do with it. I was at a loss, and stopped to think it out. I loosened my fingers on the thread and the twist ran back further than my hand. My hand dropped to my side while I studied how to do it.

This was the part of the work that I had given no thought to, and it seemed to require the most thought. Without thinking I turned the wheel a little, and the thread wound up on the spindle. "Oh, there it is!" By accident I had discovered what I wanted to know, and could not figure out. I at once drew more thread and put twist into it, and then wound it on the spindle. I was so pleased with my success that I continued until I had the spindle full. The

thread was irregular in size and very coarse; but then it was thread, and good strong thread at that; for I could not break it with my hands without cutting my fingers.

The next morning early, I got at the spinner for practice. Charlie came over nearly every day now, and as he had not been over the previous day, he was likely to come to-day, and I wanted to be able to spin handily before he saw me working the machine. Sometimes lumpy places would be found in the thread, and I soon found that I could draw these out to a considerable extent, if I pulled it a little before I got much twist into it; and then I discovered that I could draw the thread very much finer than I had drawn it. I thought I would try to draw it as fine as I possibly could, and I soon found that I could make quite a respectable thread. I stopped and wound the thread off the spindle and started a new lot; I drew it out fine, twisted it carefully and wound it on the spindle.

I had learned a great deal about spinning in the past few hours, and had found that my spinner would answer the purpose for which I had made it.

About ten o'clock Charlie came, and was astonished to see me spinning thread, and was greatly pleased with the quality of my production. I made a spindle full of quite fine thread for Charlie to take back with him to show the women; but I took care that he did not see either of the first two balls.

I was so weary with the steady application and study of the past six or seven days, that I decided to

rest for the remainder of the day; and I asked Charlie if he would remain with me and have a good lazy visit. He promised to do so, and I got our dinners ready at once. When dinner was over we sat down and passed the afternoon very quietly.

CHAPTER XXI.

Consultations and confidences—Charlie's story—I tell mine—My mother—I long to leave the island—The kid—A visit from the ladies—Our plans—The loom begun—The ladies learn to spin.

WHEN we were seated I said, "Now let us try and forget that we are prisoners on this speck of land, and imagine that we are either sitting in the shade that spreads over an English lawn, or beside a friendly miner's camp or a shepherd's hut, and let us talk of happier days."

"To me nothing can be sadder than a rehearsal of my earlier experience," said Charlie. "I would rather talk of our prospects and lay plans to enjoy what I once enjoyed, but which I now find I did not half appreciate. Nevertheless, I have a curiosity to know something of your history, and if you will repeat a portion of it I will gladly listen, and then we will discuss means for leaving this God-forsaken island. That interests me more than any other subject."

"That isn't fair, for I have no desire to tell who or what I am; and I don't believe it would interest you to know. But I thought if I should leave the island

alone, it would be well for me to know all about you, that I might send word to your people. As far as I am concerned, it don't matter about me, for I would not want my people to know of my dilemma if it were in my power to send them word. I am simply a stray waif, and it makes little odds to me where I live, or for that matter where I die. My whole life has been a failure. I seem to have been the subject of a destiny with nothing in it. Circumstances have always sent me where I did not want to go, and kept me where I had no desire to stay; yet something higher than earth has protected me thus far, and I am going to trust to that protection until it ceases, without any more complaining than my poor flesh will force out."

"Well, I will tell you this much: Herbert and I were traveling for pleasure. We visited several countries, and at last took in Australia and New Zealand. Herbert is a good fellow, with a kind heart; but was rather spoiled at home, and is a little overbearing and selfish. When we were in Auckland we were invited to a friend's house, where we met Mrs. Travers and her niece. Herbert fell head over ears in love with the girl Annie, and to get him to leave for home I could not. The ship by which we should have sailed, but for this love affair, left over two months earlier than the 'Watchword,' but Mrs. Travers was to sail by the 'Watchword' because some gentleman whom she called the Commodore was to sail in that old tub. The Commodore was a very intimate friend of the Captain of the 'Watchword,' and was to take the place of her niece's guardian. Herbert insisted upon

waiting for the 'Watchword,' so as to enjoy the society of our new-made friends. His domineering way carried the day and landed us on this island. I know very little about either Mrs. Travers or her niece; but presume they are just what they claim to be. That is how we came to be passengers on the 'Watchword,' and that is all I know of them. We only met the Commodore about a week before we sailed, and he has no claim on me, but he acts as if I were his lackey. I tell you it is very tough for one brought up as I have been."

"Charlie, if you will promise me on the word of an English gentleman that you will never divulge what I tell you, farther than I give you liberty to do so, I will tell you a little of my history. It may be that the time may come when it will be well for you to know who I am; for if I should go to sea and get lost, and you should eventually get rescued, you can let my people know what became of me, so that any provision that my father may have made for me may be divided amongst the other heirs. I do not wish them to find out how miserably I failed in this world; but it may save them from trouble about the estate. If my father is still alive he is going on well toward eighty years of age. The chances are that he is dead, and if so, let the estate be divided without reference to me."

Charlie promised that he would not divulge anything that I told him, and so I proceeded. "I have not heard my name pronounced since I left the London docks for Australia. I have simply answered to the name under which I took shipping." Then

I told him my real name and the address of my father.

Charlie looked at me in utter amazement. "What!" he cried, grasping my hand; "is it really true. I have often heard you spoken of." He then, to my surprise, told me that his family were intimate friends of a family whose estate adjoined my father's. Continuing, he said, "I have often met them and have heard them tell of the son of their neighbor, who left home, and that they had never heard of him, and how anxious they were about him. Why, your parents sent to the detective bureaus of every country to find you, and spent thousands of pounds. Your mother never was happy after you left. I have often heard them mention the poor lady and her trouble, and your father blamed himself for driving you away, and did all he could to find you. But I believe they never traced you farther than to London. Why did you leave and cause your friends so much misery?"

I could not answer a word; I broke completely down and wept like a child. Charlie said no more until my grief had somewhat subsided. As soon as I could speak I said, "Oh, my angel mother—do you know if she yet lives?" Charlie replied that he had no recollection of having ever heard of her death, but since he went to college he had not met his friends often, and it might have occurred without his knowledge.

"Yes, I remember your friends' grounds adjoined ours on one side and Lord Kilraine's on the other. They, of course, would know all about our family. I

always felt that my mother was alive, and when I sailed from New Zealand, my greatest joy was in the prospect of once more beholding her. Somehow, that night while lying on the east end of this island, under that bush, bruised and nearly dead, I felt that her spirit hovered over me, and ever since I have been oppressed with a feeling that she is dead, and it takes the joy from out of the thought of home; for what would home be to me without my mother."

I was so broken down with the rush of thoughts that our conversation had conjured up, that I wept like a child, and putting my hands together in prayer, as that loving, gentle mother had taught me to do in my baby days, and looking up to heaven with streaming eyes, I prayed, "Oh, angel mother, if thy loving spirit has joined the hosts of washed ones, and if it is permitted to hover over those it loved on earth, accompany thy poor unworthy son, and make him to feel thy sweet presence always, that he may do only right and eventually join thee in glory. For Christ's sake. Amen."

Charlie was crying as if his heart would break, and for a long time not a word was spoken by either of us.

After our grief had partly subsided I said, "Well, Charlie, these confidences will do us good, and will draw us more closely together and make us more helpful to each other. Keep to yourself what I have told you; I cannot make a confidant or friend of either Herbert or the Commodore, and as to the ladies, I would rather they did not know who my people are. If you ever get to England without me, act judiciously,

and do not divulge what I have told you, unless you are convinced it will do somebody good. I don't know why—perhaps it is because we often talk of my leaving the island alone—but I have a feeling that I shall never see England again, and for some time I have been possessed of a desire to tell you this much of my past history, so that some one would know who I am.”

I little thought then, that the fact of having divulged my identity to him would be the cause of breaking my promise to him; but how little we know what the future has in store for us.

I suggested that a walk would do us good. We started to the swamp and procured some bait, then took the line and went to the cove and spent the rest of the afternoon in talking about how to build and launch a boat and in catching fish. Charlie returned to his camp in the evening, carrying with him a large fish and a ball of thread that I had spun. I retired early and slept away the effects of the excitement that our conversation had caused.

Next morning I arose with an intense desire to leave the island, and if I had had the means, though it were but a raft, I verily believe I would have started.

What is it that makes us feel so different at times? Sometimes I would feel almost indifferent as to getting away, and would reason it out that I might as well live there as anywhere. If I reached England I would only be in the way of my friends; each would have his or her own family, and as I was too old to

place myself in the same worldly relationship, there would be no vacant place for me to fill. My ways would be so rude and unpolished that they would all be ashamed of me, and this would make it unendurable for me. I had spent the best part of my life away from them, and in this way I had better finish it, without interrupting them in their peace. But this morning I would have started for home, if the means had been at hand, regardless of consequences.

I felt I must shake off this feeling, and began to bestir myself and decide how I should employ my time, so as to distract my thoughts.

I went to the goat pen, and behold, the first kid of the season was jumping about. I watched it with a great deal of curiosity and pity. I felt sorry to have to take its life that I might feed on the food that nature had provided for it. As it was the kid of one of the wild goats, I would have to teach its mother to be milked. I decided to allow it a day with its mother before despatching it, so I fed the goats and gave them drink and prepared to work again at my spinner.

My experience of the previous day gave me a start in the way of success, and I found a continual improvement in my work. About nine o'clock Charlie and the two ladies came to see me. Women's curiosity was so strong that they could not wait longer to see the machine with which I made so much better thread than it was possible to make by hand. They were greatly interested in the working of the awkward affair. Mrs. Travers tried to work it, and declared that she would learn to spin.

"Yes," said I; "you should both learn, and when I get the loom made you must learn to weave, and Charlie will learn to break and hackle the hemp for you, so that when I leave to bring deliverance to you, you can clothe yourselves."

"I will gladly learn to do anything and everthing," said Charlie. "I feel very different from what I did when I first came to the island. I had been accustomed to having servants do everything for me, and felt that I could not do anything. I now feel that I will play the part of servant to myself; in fact, I am heartily ashamed of the way we treated you during the earlier part of our stay here, and beg your pardon a thousand times. I will atone for it the best way I can."

I knew that as Charlie had learned something of my past history, he would acknowledge that socially I had the advantage of him, and this had produced his present feeling of shame for his past treatment.

I invited them to visit my goat pen and see the new comer. They were greatly interested, and thought it was a pity to kill the little kid; but our necessities knew no law of mercy. It was arranged that Charlie should come over every day, and help to milk the goats, and carry a part of the milk back with him until the flock became sufficiently tame to allow some of them to be removed to their camp.

We found that another lot of pottery would be necessary very soon. They had broken so many pieces that they were very short, and a number had become so saturated with fat, milk and other substances, that

they were unfit to hold food. I said to Charlie that I thought Herbert and the Commodore should at least carry and mix the clay and I would form the ware. I had not searched for clay on my side of the island and did not know whether it could be found; but as the old furnace was still standing, I thought it would prove a shorter job to make it where I had made the last batch.

I told them that I had discovered that the new plantain was growing, and I thought it quite possible we might get enough, fresh and green, for our dinners. Charlie and I set out to gather it, and soon returned with enough to satisfy us all. I had dinner spread as before and we all partook of it.

When it was over, Charlie said, "There is a matter that I must speak of, although I greatly dislike to mention it. In spite of the warning you gave us when the rice was ripe; we did not gather enough to put us through until it ripens again, and within a very few weeks we will be without any. I do not know what we will do then."

"You surely cannot expect me to help you out of that box after my repeated urgings and warnings. I have enough to meet my reasonable wants, and perhaps feed an occasional visitor, until the next crop matures, but I cannot feed a company of six. You will be here almost every day helping me, and if the ladies are going to learn to spin, they will be here every few days. When any of you are here I will certainly feed you and give you the best that I have; but you know that I am in no frame of mind to provide for the two companions you have left behind you

to-day. You are all welcome to come to me when you please. I will do the best that I can for you; but not an ounce of my rice will be carried to the other side of the pond."

"You are very reasonable and very kind," said Charlie, "and we cannot ask any more than what you propose, and indeed have no right to ask that much. If we have to live here in future years this shortness will not occur again."

We went outside and began to discuss the building of the loom. This work could not be done out of doors, and there was no room for it in my house. What was to be done? We would have to build a house for it. We could place the loom just to the north side of the wheel, but at such a convenient distance that one house would cover both the spinner and the loom. Then we could make it large enough to hold our store of hackled hemp; and we could place our break and hackle still to the north of this house, so that the dust and pieces of fibre would not reach our dwelling. If we built the house first, the goats would occupy it, so I thought it best—now that the rains were just about past—to build the loom first, and then when all was completed, put the house over it.

Should we build a substantial house such as mine, or a light one to answer the purpose until the stormy season set in; and then, if we still needed it, replace it with one capable of standing a storm? They all voted for a light structure just sufficient for shade and protection against the goats.

This matter was thus settled. The loom was to be built first, then covered with a light building for the present.

I suggested that the ladies had better set to work and learn the art of spinning as soon as possible, and work at it every day so they would have enough thread for a piece of cloth by the time the loom was ready.

I described to them what we would need to have ready to make a piece of cloth when the loom was completed. We would decide how long we would make our piece of cloth. Then we would want enough threads all cut this length to make it. The number would depend upon the width that we agreed upon. We would see how many threads laid side by side filled a certain portion of that width, and then multiply to find the total number. The ends of these threads must be fastened to a round log, and that log must be put in so that it could be rolled over, to wind the cloth on as it was woven. A similar log must be at the other end of the loom, on which the thread must be wound to be unwound as it was wound upon the first log. Now, every alternate thread must be lifted up, and the alternate ones drawn down to let the cross thread go between them, then this process must be reversed, and the thread that went crosswise must be wound upon a piece of wood long enough to reach all the way through between these threads, so as to be put in at one end with one hand, and taken out at the other with the other hand, and put back through again. Then there must be something to pound the threads up with to make the cross threads

lie close together. "All these things must be done to make cloth," I said. I supposed that about three feet was the ordinary width of cloth, and I judged about twenty feet would be long enough for the first piece. I had a very clear idea of how to do most of the things that I wanted done, but was rather cloudy on some points. They would become clearer further on. I would plant, first of all, four posts in the ground, make a frame, and would then work everything out as I came to it.

The ladies spent most of the afternoon trying to spin—first one and then the other. They soon found that if one would spin and the other prepare the hemp, by drawing it out into nearly the size wanted for twisting, they could make greater progress, and so they worked at it in this way, taking turns at each job.

Charlie and I went and cut such pieces from the fallen trees as we thought necessary and brought them to camp. There were twelve pieces in all.

A start was now made at the loom. The ladies had made quite a commencement at spinning, and their production was not so bad, considering the machinery they had to do it with, and their want of knowledge of the art. I warned them not to break the spindle, as it would not stand a very strong pull. If we had tools and metals we could do almost anything needful; but the wonder was how we did anything at all, without any other tool than an axe.

"What a blessing," said Charlie, "that you were so thoughtful as to bring it with you. None of the rest

would have dreamed of its usefulness, and if we had not had it, we would have been short of more than half the comforts that we now enjoy."

"Bushwhacking, my young friend, is a rough business; but one learns many practical and useful lessons at it. I am very thankful that I learned how to use the axe and that I had foresight enough, although very sick at the time, to bring it with me. I often wonder what we will do if we have to stay here until it is worn out."

They all took supper with me, after which they left, saying that they would return and work the next day.

CHAPTER XXII.

Kid-killing—Building the loom—Hard and delicate work—The first cloth—Charlie learns how to milk—Herbert's jealousy—My antipathy to the Commadore—The weave-house—Our larder—Herbert's jealousy culminates—My anger displays itself—I offer the ladies shelter.

NEXT morning I took a cord with me and went to the pen, and climbing up the logs, threw a noose over the neck of the young kid, and soon drew it up and strangled it. I took the raft and went out some distance in the swamp and dropped it off. Having fastened a stone to its body it sank to the bottom, and I returned to camp and fed my flock. How I disliked the job of destroying those innocent kids!

Apart from the necessary work of housekeeping my every moment would now be devoted to making the loom. It was always my disposition to get through with any work that I had to do while my mind was fully set on it, and now that loom would fill my head until it was done.

I made a sort of narrow spade out of a stick of wood, and commenced to dig the holes for the posts.

I had measured off the ground and got stakes set where the holes were to be dug before Charlie and the ladies arrived. I got Charlie to dig the holes, and I cut the tops of the four posts off very square, and soon had them set, and I then cut square shoulders on the under ends of the two side pieces that were to go on top; flattened and burnt holes through for pins to go in, and placed them on the tops, and drove pins through into the ends of the upright posts. Small cross pieces, flattened on the under side and pinned across each end of this frame completed the top.

Two side pieces required to be put on these for the round beams on which the cloth and thread would roll. I measured about three feet from the ground, and cut notches into the posts on the inside. These notches had square shoulders on the bottom, and I took a straight stick and sighted over it to see that they were perfectly level. Then I took two strong pieces and halved the ends to fit these notches and rest on these square shoulders. Then I pinned them together and wedged the pins. It was now evening, and my companions left for the night.

Next day was taken up in fitting the cross beams. These had to be cut down with pinions, to work on the side beams, and notches had to be made for them to work in, and pins put in front of them to keep them from drawing together.

The beater was a slow and particular job. For this I went to the swamp and gathered reeds. I took four reeds about one inch in diameter and long

enough to reach all the way across the loom, and flattened one side of each. With my knife I cut a great quantity of tiny flat splinters of reed, not thicker than a thread and about six inches long. Then I took the four long reeds, and tying them in pairs, I placed the splinters with each end between one of these pairs of reeds, laying a very small piece of reed between the ends of each of the reeds, as I placed their ends into the pairs of long reeds to keep them apart so that a thread could work between them, and winding thread around them at every splinter, I continued until I had it woven nearly four feet long. This beater I hung by fastening it to pieces of wood suspended from the top beams in such way as to let it swing, that it might be used to beat up the thread. I fancied it was something in that way that I had seen it done in the factories I had visited. This required several days of close application; but at last I had it finished.

The next job, and the one that puzzled me most, was to make the contrivance that should lift up and draw down the alternate threads. I will not undertake to describe it very minutely; but I did it by tying two knots quite near to each other in a pair of threads put together, then tying the ends to long pieces of reeds that would reach across the loom, having the knots exactly the same distance from the reeds. Each end of these threads was tied to reeds of this kind. There were two sets of these reeds, and when the one pulled up the other would pull down. I took strong cord and hung them with the cord passing over

round, smooth reeds, and with loops near the ground into which I put long pieces of wood, passing back of where the operator would sit and the other end resting on the ground. By treading on one of these with one foot, one of these pairs of reeds would pull down, and the other would be pulled up, and then by treading on the other with the other foot and removing the first, they would reverse positions.

To put my web into the loom I made a flat piece of wood less than an inch thick and about two inches wide, and as long as the width of the loom. Then I took about a dozen threads, cut the right length for the web and tied the ends all together in one knot, then another dozen and so on until I had as many threads as would make the web of cloth. Then laying these knotted ends on the logs on which they were to be wound, I laid this thin piece of wood on the threads in front of the knots and tied the ends of the piece of wood firmly to the log with strong cords. I rolled the log over until the thread was all wound into it except about six feet. I then put the log into its place in the back end of the loom, and proceeded to pass the threads, one at a time through the reversing machine and the beater, alternating them through the reversing machine. When I had got them all through I went to the front of the loom and fastened them to the front log in the same way as I had fastened them to the other log.

I soon came across a new difficulty. I could not make them work unless I had some way of keeping the threads tight, or as the sailor would say, "taut."

So I fixed spring poles to lie on the bearings and by hanging stones on their ends was able to keep them reasonably tight.

I had often heard of a weaver's shuttle, and had seen something flying back and forth through the web in the factories, but as I could get nothing like it, I was content to make a very thin piece of wood long enough to go through the whole web. The ends I cut hollow so that I could wind thread on it over its ends. This was a very simple contrivance, but answered the purpose very well.

The ladies had been very faithful in their spinning, and now we were just about to realize our hopes in the production of cloth. The three stood watching me as I wound my shuttle full of thread and prepared to begin weaving.

I passed my shuttle through and held the end of the thread, and straightened it across and then drew the beater clear down to the beam. Then I reversed the threads and passed the shuttle back, then beat the thread down again, then looked at it, then passed another thread through and then another, and soon had an inch of quite solid cloth. It was pronounced a success. So the work went on, and before the day closed, we had nearly a foot of cloth woven. The ladies each tried their hands at weaving, and thought they could soon learn the art, and when they returned to England they would be able to take situations in cloth factories.

During these days I had been too busy to do more than what was absolutely necessary, and many things

required to be attended to, so I determined to spend a day in doing the work that had fallen behind.

Kids had to be destroyed, and I spent some time teaching the goats to be milked. I gave Charlie a lesson in milking. One lesson is all that is required to teach the mode of milking, and is more than I ever received; the rest is got by practice. Charlie had his lesson, and then went on with his practice. I had now nine goats giving milk, and the work of stripping them was not small; especially did I feel this, as the greater portion of the milk went to the other camp, to the two worthless fellows who made their home there.

Charlie came to me regularly every day and remained all day, returning to his camp in the evening. I often imagined that he would like to stay with me altogether; but I thought if I asked him to do so and he accepted, there would be no way of getting rid of him again, if at any time he should fall back into his old habits. So I kept him on probation, and let him keep his wardrobe and furniture at the old camp.

I proposed in the afternoon that we should go to the hill to see if the birds were laying yet. This being agreeable to Charlie, we went to the hill-top. The birds had just begun to lay, and we got all the fresh eggs we could carry away with us. After gathering the eggs we sat down to have a talk.

The sea lay all around us glistening and beautiful. The day was lovely, only a little too warm, and we both felt ready for a spell of loafing. Charlie felt com-

municative, and he opened out with, "Do you know I am looking for trouble in our camp?"

"How is that?"

"I told you that Herbert was in love with Annie. Well, he is jealous of her going to your camp almost every day with Mrs. Travers and me. He says she takes great interest in everything going on in every place but where he is, and insinuates that I am stealing her affections from him. She can see his selfishness and authoritative way, and I believe his influence over her is dying out, and that she don't think as much of him as she did. But I have no reason to believe that she is transferring her affections in my direction. I esteem her very highly. She is true and kind, and I don't see how one of her disposition could ever think of tying herself to Herbert after finding out his true character and disposition. I never knew him until we came to this island. They say adversity tries friends. Adversity has tried him, and he is not all gold."

"Why do you not tell him to get up and go to work. There are many things that he can do. He can gather all the eggs that your camp will want for the next six weeks, or two months. He can carry salt water and make salt; he can catch fish, kill kids, make fires, cook the victuals and do a hundred other things. If I were in your place I would not hesitate to tell him just what I expected him to do. Then there is that lazy swell of a Commodore. I would tell him that he would either have to work or refrain from eating. I would not feed him. He is quite as able to

work as you are. You owe him nothing, nor are you bound to him by any ties. Let him get up and work for himself."

"It is coming to that with Herbert, but the Commadore is out of all reach. If I told him to work or starve, he would just laugh at me, and walk over and take the food out of my hand by force. While there is anything within reach he will take it, though everyone else wants. You are the only one who ever made him come to terms; but I believe he got the better of you in the end."

"I am of a very peaceable disposition, and anyone who will treat me kindly can lead me with a thread; but my temper is quick and I have a proud disposition that will not be trampled on. Rouse me and I can be ugly. I am forgiving and do not naturally hold spite; but trample on me and I am slow to forgive. When I was put into the boat with you, on the day we left the 'Watchword,' the expression used by the Commadore lifted a wall between him and me that can never be surmounted. I would not for the world have him do me a kindness. I believe if I were drowning and he should throw me a life preserver, I would sink before I would take it. I cannot be ungrateful or unkind to those who do me favors, and I could be neither grateful nor kind to him, and so would not accept any of his favors. I have sworn—and if I have done wrong in doing so, may my mother and my God forgive me—that if he ever enters my camp I will avenge myself of the wrongs he has done me. As to Herbert he is little better than the Commo-

dore. I can never forgive him for going into my hut that day and carrying off my provisions in company with the Commodore, and laughing his demoniacal laugh when the Commodore knocked me down. Oh, no, I will live to be even with both of them."

We arose and returned to camp, and Charlie soon left for his own quarters.

The next day my three visitors were on hand early. The ladies took the spinner and loom in hand, and Charlie and I set to work to build the house over our cloth factory. It took us two days to get it done, as it had to be built of small logs up to the roof with a door in the east end. We covered the top with bark peeled from the fallen trees. I made the door of split logs, flattened and pinned to cross pieces. I did not put hinges on it, but fastened it on end by slipping the top behind a pole that I had placed there for that purpose.

Every day for more than a week the women came over to work at the spinner and loom, and Charlie and I worked at the break and hackle. Every night the milk from eight or nine goats was carried to the other camp, and the two lazy fellows there had little to do but to eat and sleep.

Eggs were plentiful now and the plantain was growing nicely. We could catch fish when we pleased and my rice bread was sweet and pleasant to the taste. The puddings that I made of rice, milk and eggs were a delicacy, and the company often said they could live very comfortably on the fare if they only had civilization with it.

I did not like to kill the kids, and so I did not have much fresh meat at this season. In fact, none of us relished goats' flesh much when it became full grown. It may have been imagination, but we lost our relish for kids' flesh as the kids increased in size. The young ones would not be fit to kill for a month yet and as this was the season for eggs, we just did without meat, except an occasional feast on frogs' legs.

Every day my helpers came, and my web of cloth was nearing completion; but I could see that there was trouble in the air about something. Annie was very quiet and subdued and Mrs. Travers was not much better. Charlie threw out a hint or two, and I began to think that our plans for clothing might not all carry out as smoothly as I had hoped.

I felt that whatever might happen at the other camp there would be no trouble at mine. Neither the Commodore nor Herbert would venture to come to me, and as this was only a private affair between Herbert and Annie, in which Charlie might be indirectly involved, I could not by any possibility be drawn into it.

The web was nearly completed. Annie was weaving. The web wanted turning on the beams for the last time and Charlie had gone to help Annie to do it. Mrs. Travers had gone to the spring for a drink. I was behind the factory using the break, when I heard an angry voice inside the weave-house, and recognized it as Herbert's.

"This is how things are going on here, is it? Just

as I expected. Very sweet indeed; working lovingly together. If either of you think to deceive me you are mistaken. Now, madam, you must get out of this and walk home with me, or you and I are done with each other. Charlie thinks he is very smart coming here every day to live with his low-bred chum, but I will put a stop to this kind of thing or know the reason why."

"Now, Herbert," said Annie, "don't be so unreasonable. Do act like a gentleman. You know we must have clothing, for you as well as the others, and how else could we get it unless we came here."

My anger had begun to rise the moment I heard his voice; but it had not reached its height until I heard the expression "low-bred chum." I dropped my work and walked around to the door in which he stood. Mrs. Travers had returned from the spring and was standing a few feet from him, as pale as death. I walked up to him, caught him by the shoulder and gave him a jerk that turned him clear around, and left him fully four feet from the door when he again faced me. I lifted my hand and pointed the way he came, and said, "Make tracks out of this camp as quick as your legs will carry you, and never let me see your sponging face here again, or, by the heavens above, I will break every bone in your body!"

A flush of anger suffused his whole face, and he blurted out, "You low-bred scoundrel, how dare you put your hand on a gentleman."

The last word had scarcely left his lips when I struck him a fearful blow in the face. He fell like a

log, but was quickly on his feet again, when I struck him another telling blow behind the right ear, which sent him to grass again.

The ladies and Charlie reached me before he rose again, caught hold of me and begged me not to strike him again. I shouted, "Don't touch me; I will teach him a lesson he won't forget in a hurry."

He struggled to his feet, and for the third time I knocked him down. As he appeared to have enough, I said to him, "Now, sir, walk in that direction, and never let me see your face here again. Move quickly; I have no time to waste with you." He moved away slowly, and I followed close behind him until he had passed the houses, and then lifting my foot I gave him a terrific kick, with the injunction, "Take that as a parting gift!"

He turned his face, distorted with passion, and looked fiercely at me for a moment, but as his spirit seemed to be broken, he quietly walked on. I stood and watched him for some distance and then returned to the company. Annie had fainted and Charlie had run for water, while Mrs. Travers was holding her.

I thought it was better for me not to go near them, and so I went into my house and washed my hands and face. Afterwards I went back to my work as if nothing unusual had happened.

It was only a few minutes when Charlie came and said, "The ladies think they had better go. I think you had better come and see them before they start, and see if any understanding is necessary for the future."

I went around to them and said, "Are you going so soon? I would like you to stay to supper."

Mrs. Travers replied, "We are so upset that we shall not be able to do anything more to-day, and we may as well go now."

"Shall I expect you to-morrow?"

"Oh, that will depend. I don't know how this unfortunate affair will end; but I expect we will be peremptorily forbidden to return."

"By whom?"

"Oh, Herbert will be so angry that nothing will appease his wrath, and the Commodore will likely join him, and we will be told not to visit your camp again."

"Will it be your wish to come if they do not object?"

"Most certainly. What else can we do?"

"If you wish to come, do so, no matter what either Herbert or the Commodore may say. They have no right to interfere with either of you. You do not belong to them, and you owe them little or nothing, for either protection or support. You have yourselves to look after. Look after your own interests and be independent, and let them understand that they are not going to control you. If they make it too warm for you over there, come here and I will give up my house to the ladies and occupy the weaving-room myself. I am not low-bred, and I will show you that I can be both provider and protector; but do not leave them if it is possible for you to stay there. I only offer this as an alternative. I would prefer that

you would stay and have your suppers and go home at the usual hour, and act very much as if nothing had happened. I have still one more man to square accounts with, and then I think my work on this island will be nearly finished."

Turning to Annie I said, "How do you feel about it? Do you wish to come?"

"Oh, certainly," she replied. "I will do whatever my aunt says is for the best. I think Herbert acted very ungentlemanly and unkind, and I will not soon forgive him for it."

"Will you all stay to supper?"

They decided to do so. After supper was over they went home.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Trouble brewing—Charlie deserts to my side—A raid upon my stores—I punish the thieves—My fight with the Commodore—His treachery—I read him a lecture—Charlie a worker—The ladies escape to me—Additional quarters—Tailoring and furniture-making—Our refrigerator.

VERY early next morning, Charlie arrived at my camp in a great state of perturbation. He had not breakfasted and had spent a very unpleasant night. The ladies were greatly agitated and did not know what to do. They would not be at my camp that day, and perhaps not again at all. The Commodore had joined with Herbert in vowing vengeance on me, and they both peremptorily forbade either of the ladies from ever visiting my camp again. The ladies had cried most of the night, and had not slept, while he sometimes thought that both the Commodore and Herbert would attack him. They abused him in the most vulgar manner for what he was doing, declared their independence of me, and said they would only visit my camp to take revenge for what had occurred.

This was something the way in which Charlie

described the scene; but I knew that I had been called all the blackguard names that their ingenuity could invent, and if there was one thing that angered me more than another, it was to have insinuations cast upon the standing of my family.

We breakfasted together, and after milking and feeding the goats and getting my household duties attended to, we went to the weave-house and finished the web and took it out of the loom.

We had quite a stock of hemp hackled and ready for spinning, and still a quantity that required breaking and hackling. I thought it was better for us to go on with the work and complete the preparation of the hemp, so that it would be in a convenient form to lay up in the weave-house, and then we could make cloth as we needed it. The remainder of the day we spent at the break and hackle.

After supper I said to Charlie, "Now, should those men come to this camp they will come for mischief, and it will be just as well for us to have our plans laid. You have either to stand by me or to stand by them. If you are not prepared to stand by me, you must not come back to me again. If you are going to see me through this, all right. Should they come—which will not be until Herbert has recovered from his thrashing—you will have to take Herbert in hand, a task that ought to be easy for you, and I will interest the Commodore. I have no expectation of a visit from them; but they will blow and frighten the ladies, and then postpone their attack until their threats are gray-headed, and then, possibly, forget all about it.

Should they disappoint me, however, and come over, I will give them a fitting reception."

Charlie gave me to understand that while he would deprecate trouble with Herbert—if they came to my camp to attack me—he would see that Herbert could render no assistance to the Commodore.

Charlie was ready to depart. He evidently did not relish a return to his camp; but I told him it was better for him to endure it as long as he could, for if he left now, all communication would cease between us, and the ladies might be allowed to suffer serious privations and no one to relieve them.

I gave him the web of cloth to carry to the ladies, and told him to advise them to make clothing for themselves out of it; for it was impossible to tell when they might get another chance to get any addition to their wardrobe. He did not carry any milk or other food.

When he reached the camp a very large-sized row awaited him, and it got so hot that he left and returned to me.

The Commodore and Herbert evidently thought that Charlie had got pretty well versed in the art of providing victuals, and now that they had two ladies, he could be made useful in providing and preparing food. They also thought that if they pressed him very hard he would refrain from visiting me, and had no idea that their pressure might cause him to refrain from visiting them. When he started away from their camp in the direction of mine, they perhaps repented; but it was too late.

I said to Charlie, "You are welcome to remain with me until they come to their senses, which will not be very long, and we will set to work and make every possible preparation for the future. One thing: you must not approach them until they hold out the olive branch."

Next morning we commenced to build a furnace for crockery, and spent three whole days at it. Then we took the raft across the swamp and brought back clay till we had an abundance of it. We then spent several days in forming the ware and setting it in the sun to dry. All this, with our other duties, had consumed nearly two weeks, and yet no sign from our neighbors. Charlie was becoming quite restless, and I thought I saw where the difficulty lay. He was anxious about Annie. He evidently thought more of her than he was aware of, and his absence from her was opening his eyes to the truth.

I took him in hand one evening and said to him, "Charlie, you are anxious about Annie. Now take my advice and just let things go on as they are. It will not be very long until their rice will give out, and then they will have to do something. They cannot live long without either rice or milk. A crisis will come soon, and Mrs. Travers will set her foot down. She and Annie will walk over here, and Herbert and the Commodore will be left alone. To lose both you and the ladies will break them all up, and a crisis will come again, in which our terms will be accepted. When this comes you can all return to them again, on condition that they do their share

of the work, and your future will be vastly more comfortable."

Charlie appeared satisfied with my reasoning and things went on better for several days.

We got our crockery burned and had a fine lot of it, amongst which were three churns for making butter, and a large vessel in the shape of a pot, which I intended to use for the purpose of burning tar. There were trees on the island of some species of pine, containing pitch. I knew that if I ever made a boat, I would require pitch with which to caulk it, and I was making provision for it. The churns were to churn cream to make butter for use on my rice bread, and also to mix with my sour milk curds for making them into cheese.

Our large flock of goats all gave milk now, and as none of it went to the other camp, we had a large quantity of sour milk, which we made into curd cheese. Our stock of cheese was increasing rapidly. I made it into round balls and laid it on plates for some days to partly cure, and then packed into large crocks, churns, etc.

Each day one of us would make a trip to the hill and bring away a lot of fresh eggs. Then we boiled the sea water down to about three times its natural strength, and packed the eggs in large crocks, and covered them with this strong brine.

In this way we had spent several weeks and had got things into pretty good shape for living. We began to think we were not to have a visit from the other camp at all, and were wondering how they were getting along.

Every day when Charlie went to the hill he would look over at their camp. He ascertained that the fire was kept burning, and he had seen them moving about.

One morning Charlie went for eggs, and while I was working about the fire, making cheese and boiling salt, I heard a sound that was different from what the goats would likely make. I turned and looked toward the house, and behold! the Commodore and Herbert, each with a jar of rice in his arms, were stealing cautiously out of the house.

They had evidently observed that one of us went to the hill every morning, and thinking, probably, that I was the one, they had come over with the intention of robbing me in my absence. Finding me at work at the fire, they had crept stealthily into my house and then to the store-room, the door of which was not fastened, and had each purloined a jar of rice and were almost successful in getting away with them.

Lying near the fire was a heap of wood cut about three feet long, ready to be put into the furnace. Seizing one of these pieces, about the size of my wrist, I started in pursuit. The Commodore had the start of Herbert, and I overtook the latter first. Bringing the club down on his head with a good smart blow I felled him to the ground, the rice crock breaking in the fall, and the rice flying in every direction. I did not stop a second, but continued in pursuit of the Commodore who, hearing me gaining on him, stopped short, and turning, threw the crock of rice at me. He did it so hurriedly that it missed the mark. Instead

of striking him with the stick I dropped it, and with the momentum of my speed I sprang at him, and struck him with my fist full in the face. He fell like a log; I turned quick as thought to see where Herbert was, and saw him in the act of trying to regain his feet. Turning to the Commodore, who had risen from the ground, I dealt him another blow. He staggered like a drunken man and fell. I was mad, and determined not to let up on him until I had taken full revenge. So sitting down on the Commodore, I showered blows upon his face and head most unmercifully. Herbert having gained his feet, took a compass around us in the direction of his camp; he evidently did not want to give me the opportunity of rising from the Commodore and attending to him again. Seeing he had forsaken his companion in distress, I stopped pounding the Commodore, but continued to hold him to the earth, and taking him by the throat said, "Now, you miserable, lazy old ruffian and thief, I will break your spirit or dig your grave." He commenced a violent struggle, but I gripped his throat until his tongue protruded. "Keep quiet, you cruel old villian; you are in my power, and I am going to settle a few small scores that I have against you. I want you to beg my pardon for the way you have treated me since we first met." He again struggled, but I gripped his throat hard, and struck him in the face. "Now, sir, do you beg my pardon?" It required three or four repetitions of this medicine before he at last gasped out, "I do."

“Now one thing more. Will you promise me never

to visit my camp or molest either me or my property again." He seemed to hesitate, but I gripped his throat and lifted my hand to strike, and he said in the same choking tone, "I will."

I released my hold on his throat and allowed him to get up. He staggered about a little and then started as if to go, and I turned around to return to my camp. Turning again to see how he was getting along, I found him in the act of making for me with the club that I had felled Herbert to the ground with, and which I had forgotten all about. He evidently thought that, armed with it, he would be more than a match for me and so returned to the attack, attempting to strike me from behind. I turned just in time to frustrate his designs, but the blow aimed at my head struck my left arm, glancing down and bruising it severely. With my right hand I struck him on the side of the head and he fell to the ground. Taking up the club that had fallen from his hands, I threw it to some distance, and turning just as he was in the act of rising, I again knocked him down, then stood looking at him as he lay, not daring to rise again. I said: "You thieving, cowardly cur; is there to be no peace with you? I warn you that if you ever come near me again, I will not stop until I stop your breath. You are a lazy old brute, expecting every one to be your servant, and you have a fit companion in the thief who has just sneaked off. Tell him for me that I will attack him on sight, and he had better keep clear of me." The Commodore undertook to rise again and I gave him another blow

that sent him back to sod. "Don't be restless," said I; "I want to preach you a short sermon. I want to give you a lesson in moral ethics, a branch of education that you were sadly neglected in. It is no use reasoning with you—your moral cuticle is too tough. Like steak I have seen in the mines, pounding is the only thing that will do you good. When you get into another very low state of moral turpitude come back for some rice and I will give you another lesson in athletics. You may rise now and I will assist you to make a start in the world in the direction of your camp."

He had begun to sulk, or was afraid of the start I had offered to give him, and he would not rise. I stooped over his head, and with my open hand began to cuff his ears very smartly, while I kept repeating, "Get up! Get up!" At last he got up, and when he gained his feet, I treated him as I had treated Herbert the day I started him for home from my camp.

I returned to my house and washed the blood off my hands, and Charlie soon afterward came in with the eggs. I told him of the encounter, and asked him to prepare a clay poultice for my arm, which he did. It was very black and bruised, and pained me greatly, but I was glad it was not my head, where it would have been in another second, had I not turned when I did. Charlie then went and gathered up all the spilled rice that he could get off the ground and brought it to camp.

"Charlie," said I, "there is one of four things to be done. I must leave this island or the Commodore

must; or I must kill the Commodore or he must kill me. There will be no permanent peace between us. I would not go to sleep where either he or Herbert could get at me. There is no telling when that murderous old thief will lay some plan to attack me when I am not prepared, and if he ever gets the start of me, he will never let up while there is breath in me. I don't think Herbert will try to take revenge out of me, unless urged to do so by the Commodore. There is a volcano of wrath pent up in the old villain's heart just now, but it will not erupt until his face assumes its normal condition. I tell you, Charlie, he looks as if he had been put through a sausage mill."

Charlie worked away like a good fellow. He had learned to do almost everything, and for a few days he had almost everything to do. My arm was very lame, and I could only do what could be done with one hand.

The eggs were not as fresh as we would like to have them, and except to go to our look-out—a thing that we never neglected in fine weather—we neither of us left camp for some days.

My arm was getting better, and we had decided to go on with our hemp and complete the small amount that remained to be broken and hackled, and had just got to work, when one day we heard female voices and Mrs. Travers and Annie came into our camp.

Both looked pale and frightened; both were nearly breathless from exertion. The Commodore had threatened them if they left, and they had slipped away

unobserved, and had hurried along for fear of being pursued and overtaken.

They said they would have come at the first and any time subsequently, but they dared not leave. They were nearly starved, for they had not had anything to eat except eggs, frogs and plantain. The rice had given out a few days after the other trouble with Herbert, and they had had none since.

The morning of the "big fight," as I called it, the two men had started out to procure food, and returned in an awful plight. Herbert had lain in his bed two days with the pain in his head. The Commodore's face was not well yet; it was very black and sore. For three or four days he could not see out of his eyes, and his face was something frightful to look at.

The women had acted as nurses, and had put clay poultices on the Commodore's face, as had been done on the bruises at the time of the storm. Now the two men were fairly well, and they thought they could safely leave them; so they had taken advantage of the opportunity and had left them to look after themselves.

They had their suspicion as to how the men had got such a thrashing, but had not heard them say much about it. The Commodore had remarked that some one was a devil incarnate, and they thought he was referring to me. I remarked, "I presume because you knew of no other person to whom the expression could be appropriately applied."

We soon gave them a hearty meal. I assured them

that they need not fear that either of their two friends would follow them. I promised that we would set to work and provide for ourselves, and try to make them as comfortable as the circumstances would allow.

I had put poles across my house when I built it, on which to make a bed. Being alone, I had not made another on the other end until Charlie came. Now two other beds must be made in the weave-house for Charlie and me.

We fitted up a frame on which to construct these beds, and carried the bedding of grass, etc., out of our beds, and put it on the beds in the weave house. Then we gathered new material and fitted up the beds in the house for the ladies.

I told them they would have to rise earlier than they had done, as the goats must be milked early in the morning, and we would want access to the store-room; but that I would knock on the door to wake them. I said if our present arrangement became permanent, we would build another room exclusively for the ladies; but for the present, we would have to put up with the inconveniences the best way we could.

We soon got into working order again, and not hearing from the other camp, concluded that there would be no interruption of our present plans for some time. The ladies started the spinner, and worked away getting threads for another web of cloth. Charlie and I finished up the hemp and had it all stored in the weave-house convenient for operating on.

We built out of stone, in the same way that I had built mine, another room to the west of my house. We covered it in the same way, and built windows in it; also a very secure door, and when it was completed gave the ladies possession of it, and dedicated it exclusively to their use. Then Charlie and I moved back into my old quarters.

When the ladies had enough thread spun for another web of cloth, we put it into the loom. We made this web about thirty feet long. The ladies had managed to make the other cloth into dresses for themselves, and although very coarse, it was vastly preferable to the rags that had covered them before they adopted hemp clothing.

Charlie had made a suit of goat-skin and wore it continuously. I was dressed in my suit of hooked hemp, and the ladies in woven hemp. We cut a grotesque figure, and if some one could have visited us from the outside world, they would doubtless have had a good laugh at our attire.

When the web was in the loom one of the ladies would weave and the other spin, and Charlie and I were free to engage in other work.

We felt the want of furniture, and I determined to meet it. I went to the swamp and gathered a lot of reeds, and then a quantity of long, tough grass that grew around the edge of the swamp. I took the larger reeds and cut legs the right height for a table. Then side and end pieces. I then took smaller reeds that could be bent, and bound them into the corners for braces, winding them with grass. In this way

I fastened the frame together and braced it very strongly.

Then I put pieces of reed the whole length of the table about two inches apart, and wove grass into the top, over two and under one, and alternating. This covered the entire top quite smoothly.

It was rather a tedious job, but when completed made a very good table. It was about three feet wide and four long, and very light and convenient. We could all sit down at once to this table as comfortably as possible.

The ladies were very proud of this piece of furniture, and promised to weave a cloth for it, so that it might have a respectable appearance, and we would not have to eat from the bare top.

I next made six chairs; four for our dining-room and two for the ladies' room. These were very comfortable and convenient. The legs and backs were of reeds and the seats of woven grass. The braces were tied firmly into their places with grass.

When these were done I made two rocking chairs, and some small stands for the ladies' use and for holding flowers, etc., for we decided to adorn our house somewhat and make it as home-like as possible.

There were two or three springs in a cluster, from one of which we got water for household use. The water from all these joined at a little distance down and formed a tiny rivulet. Over this we built a small house and covered it with bark, and then fixed the bottom in such a way that about an inch of this spring water would stand on it all the time. Our pans of milk

we set in this cool water. This kept them cold and allowed a greater amount of cream to rise, and also made the milk more pleasant as a drink. We now had all the cool, fresh milk that we could possibly use.

CHAPTER XXIV.

*Finding the time—Christmas Day—Thoughts of home
— Tar-making—Boat-building—The launch—The
trial-trip—Success.*

IT was now over a year since we landed on this island, judging by the weather, the vegetable growth and the size of the young goats and fowl. We had not kept any record of time, and had no definite idea of the day of the week or month. The consequence was that all days were alike to us. We kept no sabbaths and observed no feasts. I often felt that this was not as it should be, but did not know how to ascertain, for certain, which day should be set apart for Sunday. True, we could choose any day and call it Sunday, and then number the days from that day; but somehow it did not seem satisfactory. The sun was now on its southward course and would turn northward again about the twenty-second or twenty-third of December, and I determined to utilize this fact to see how nearly I could find the date. I knew on what day of the week the twenty-second should come, and by finding the day on which the sun reached its farthest limit southward, I could make this a starting point and accept it as that date.

I made a sharp stake and drove it into the ground, leaving about three feet of it standing above, to cast a shadow. I then split a piece of wood in two and hewed the split side very smooth. This I embedded firmly in the ground with one end against the post, and the other lying to the south, or as nearly so as I could judge. I took a piece of charcoal and drew a line on this piece from the centre of the post to the south. Every day when the shadow of the top of the post reached this mark, I took a piece of charcoal and marked the place of the shadow.

After many days the shortening of the shadow lessened; then it stopped, and for four or five days it stood so still that my rudely constructed machine would not show any difference that could be measured by a mark.

I said to the others one day, after I had marked the shadow and thought I could distinguish the least perceptible change backward, "To-morrow will be Christmas Day; let's hold a festival," and we did. Such a festival! After getting our work done for the morning, we set about preparing the most elaborate dinner that our culinary art and limited supply of edibles would permit.

Of course we had fowl. One of the young sea-birds from the hill met this part of the bill. We had dessert, too; a dessert of berries that had been picked for the occasion and covered with rich cream. Then there were roast kid, frogs' legs, scrambled eggs, boiled plantain, rice bread, cold boiled rice and cream, curd cheese, fresh curds with cream, and tea and milk for

beverages. If we had had sugar to sweeten this dinner, it would have been a very palatable repast. As it was, I felt very thankful that, cast on an island so small and barren, we were able to spread such a substantial table.

After dinner was over and the table cleared, we gathered in the shade of the house, sitting on our new chairs, and prepared to spend the rest of the afternoon in a friendly talk.

That was a sad afternoon. By common impulse, each began to tell some story of his or her Christmas days at home. Mrs. Travers led off, and before she was through her short reminiscence, we were all, in spirit, back in dear old England. The homes where we spent our early happy days with their Christmas gatherings, were all present in our memories, and a common question, "Did they think of us?" was asked by every lip, for we remembered that their day had closed at almost the same hour that ours began. A deep sound of sadness was heard in every voice, and every eye was a fountain of tears. And yet it was pleasant. There was a fascination about it, the tears brought solace and for a time we seemed to partly enjoy the society of which we talked; but it left an intense longing in our hearts.

The day wore away without incident, and the shadows lengthened. I said, "To-day is Thursday, the twenty-fifth of December. From this forward let us each keep a calendar and observe the Sabbath. It may be that God has not forsaken us; let us not forget Him."

We had not heard from the other camp since the ladies came to us, and we often wondered how they were managing for clothing. There was no trouble about food, for they could put up with whatever they provided for themselves, and if they did not like it they had simply to provide better.

I told Charlie that we would undertake to make pitch, so as to be ready to build a boat. We therefore set out and cut pitchy spots and knots out of the fallen pine trees and carried them in our arms to camp until we had quite a quantity of it brought in. We then took some of the clay that we had brought for our crockery and mixed it and spread it over some flat stones, laid in an inclined position, until we had quite a large, smooth bed. We then turned the large earthen pot that we made, upside down on this bed of clay and marked all around it; then taking the pot off, made a groove in the clay a little inside of this mark, and then made a groove from the lowest point of this groove to the edge of the clay bed. We put all the pitch pine on this bed, inside of the groove that the pot would cover and turned the pot over it, and then took clay and covered the groove from the pot to the edge of the bed. A fire was then made over the pot and kept going until all the pitch in the pine was melted and ran out through the groove into a vessel placed to catch it. The pot was then raised and filled again, and the same process repeated, until we had several gallons of pitch or tar. To harden this we put it into the pot and boiled it slowly for some time.

I now determined to make a boat. I had several

plans partly matured in my head, but which of these to adopt was what puzzled me. I had thought of a dug-out, but no tree on the island was large enough alone and the splicing of several together would be a difficult job, as I only had my axe to do it with. Then I thought of trying to weave one out of reeds, but several difficulties presented themselves. Then I had speculated on building a sort of catamaran, or two reed boats, with a deck extending across both. All these plans had their advantages and disadvantages; it took some thought before I could decide which to try. At length I determined to try the reeds, and if these proved not as successful as I hoped I could try some other plan in the future.

I had always intended to leave the island in a small boat, as soon as circumstances would permit, and I wanted to be sure that the one I used for the purpose was as seaworthy as it could be made. It was now too late for me to build a boat, make my preparations to start and allow myself time—say fifty or sixty days—to reach some place of safety before the hurricane season would be on again; consequently I had some time in which to experiment, and it was with this end in view that I commenced to build my boat.

I consulted with Charlie whether we should construct the boat near to our camp and then push it all the way to the cove, by putting rollers under it, or build it at the cove where it would be ready to launch. We finally decided to build it at the camp. It would be comparatively light, and we concluded that if it took us two days to get it to the cove, it would be

short compared with the time we would lose in going back and forth to work at it. Besides, we could have shade to work under if done near the camp.

We went to the weave-house and spun and twisted together a lot of strong cords and small ropes, and also a lot of strong thread, and then melted some pitch and saturated these cords and threads and laid them to dry.

Our next contract was to lay the keel. We had measured the longest reeds that we could find in the swamp and found that about fifteen feet was the greatest length that we would be able to make the craft. We went to the trees that had been blown down and selected a good straight one, and we hewed out a keel about three inches thick, seven or eight inches wide, and the length that we had decided upon. Then we made a piece for a bow post and another for a stern post, about the same size. We carried these to the camp and laid them in the place that we had chosen for a ship-yard.

Our tools were so limited that I decided that we would not be able to give the boat strength sideways, unless we had at least one solid knee extending up both sides of the boat. Next morning Charlie and I started to the woods to find a tree or limb sufficiently crooked for our purpose. At length we found a fallen tree with a crook in the body, and a strong limb growing out just above this crook and bending somewhat backward. This we cut and hewed out to partly what we wanted, and carried it to the ship-yard.

We then placed the keel in position high enough to

work under it, and proceeded with the construction day after day.

We grooved the inside of the bow and stern posts so that the reeds could be cut long enough to be sprung in. After fastening the two posts with wooden pins into the keel, we put braces from their tops to the keel about four feet from the posts. We fitted these braces to the top of the posts and allowed them to extend over a few inches and cut square shoulders to fit down on the outsides of the posts, then a good stout pin driven into a burnt hole through these into the tops of the posts, and another pin through the other end into the keel, gave the stern and bow posts great strength.

After fitting and shaping the centre knee and pinning it to the keel with a pin extending clear through and wedged, we began fitting in the reeds. By cutting them long enough to spring into the grooves in the bow and stern posts, they remained in place of themselves, and we continued to fit them in until we had as many in as filled the two posts to their tops.

We next proceeded to bind them firmly to the centre knee by winding them fast to it with tarred cord.

We then made other knees, joined on the keel and fitted them to the reeds; putting in a knee about every twenty inches. These we pinned together and also pinned to the keel, and wound them to the reeds as we had done the centre knee. The affair looked strong and substantial.

While we were working at the boat, the women were busy every day spinning and weaving cloth with

which to cover over these reeds. Having got enough done we tarred it thoroughly and laid it out to dry.

We now turned our attention to making the gunwales. Searching until we found a tree with enough bend in it to allow each of our top pieces to be got out in one solid piece, we hewed these out and fixed them on the top of the boat. They were about two inches thick by four or five wide, and rested on the ends of the centre knee. We burned holes clear through their ends, and corresponding holes through the posts, and driving tough pins through, wedged them. Then burning smaller holes through the posts above and below these, we also wound them strongly with tarred cord.

Our next job was to fill the sides up to the gunwales, which we did by cutting and fitting reeds in and tying them to the knees with tarred cord.

The boat was now ready for its cloth sides. The way we fastened them on was quite unique, and I had more doubts about its success than about any other part of the boat. We had chosen wood for a keel and posts not too hard. I made out of very tough wood a wedge with rather a blunt end, which I used as a caulker would his caulking wedge. With this I first made a groove about a quarter of an inch deep all along the keel and up the posts close to the reeds, and spreading the cloth over the sides, caulked it firmly down into this groove with my wedge, and then sewed the top edge of the cloth to the gunwales by winding tarred cord around the gunwales and through the cloth.

The cloth covering was now on the boat. I took some inside bark of a tree, and putting one end of it into boiling water for a short time, pounded it on a stone with my hammer, and made a brush from it, and painted the tarred cloth over with a thick coat of hot pitch.

To protect this cloth covering from injury by being struck against anything, we laid another lot of reeds lengthwise over it, about three inches apart in the middle of the boat, and correspondingly nearer at the ends. We burned small holes through the bow and stern posts, and wove tarred cord through these, binding the ends of the reeds firmly to the posts; then burned three holes through the keel, one in the centre and one each at equal distance between this and the ends of the boat, and run strong cords through them and tied the reeds firmly at equal distances apart, and then tied the upper end of the cords to the gunwale.

These cords would create friction in the water and prevent speed, and would eventually wear out and break; but I could think of no other plan, and had to adopt it.

We now proceeded to complete the inside of the boat, by lining the bottom with strong reeds, tied to the knees with tarred cords pinned into holes burned into the knees. We then put in the necessary cross seats and fixed a place for a mast.

A small mast for a "mutton leg" sail, and four paddles to steer with and propel it when necessary, and enough to have a supply in case one or more should be lost, and our boat was ready for launching.

Light as the material was out of which we had constructed the boat the whole craft weighed a good deal. We could lift and carry it a short distance, and we thought it was better to do this than to use rollers. It took us nearly a whole day to get it to the cove, and we were tired enough when we had accomplished it.

We floated it and let it ride a little while. Then we got into it and paddled it around the cove. A couple of small boys could not have been prouder of a new kite than we were of that boat. The ladies came to see the launch, and were as pleased as we were. At length, satisfied that it would at least do to sail around the island in, when the weather was fine, we drew it up out of the water and returned to camp.

While we were constructing the boat the ladies had made the sail, and it was ready to hoist. We therefore determined that if the wind was favorable, we would make a circuit of the island the next day.

Next morning we were up bright and early, and our morning's work was soon completed. The day was suitable for a test of the results of our past month's arduous labor.

The ladies had their misgivings about our going out, but did not press them too hard. They accompanied us to the cove or harbor, as we called it. We soon had our little sail set, and everything in readiness to go out to sea. Our craft was too buoyant, if anything, so we concluded to ballast her with stones. We were equipped with every requisite, paddles for steering or propelling, vessels for bailing, stones for

ballast, ropes for sounding, a lunch for dinner and everything we could think of.

"All right, go ahead." I put the paddle in and we shot out through the cut and into the open sea. The wind was from the southwest, and I drew in the sail and we were soon moving in a southerly direction; then tacked for the west end of the island; tacked again to the south and again to the northwest, and we made the west end. Letting our sail loose and using the paddle, we began to search for the sunken ship that I had predicted lay in the sands just off the shore. I paddled the boat and Charlie lay over the bow peering down into the sea. Back and forth we went until we were nearly discouraged, thinking we had covered all the ground. We decided to try once more and then proceed on our voyage. Slowly we moved along to the south, then turned and took a course a little farther out than we had taken before.

"Hallo!" I stopped my paddle.

"Pull over there a little." I obeyed.

Charlie looked intently. "I see the bulwarks of a ship, and part of the deck, as sure as I live."

We moved directly over the spot and then I turned and looked over the stern. Sure enough, there it was. Part of the bulwarks above the sand in one spot and in another a part of the deck.

"See, Charlie," said I; "there are the splinters of a broken mast above that deck."

"Yes, I see it plainly."

We moved our boat up to the windward and let her float back again over the sunken wreck several times,

and peered into the sea at the remains of the old hulk. We must have spent nearly two hours here, trying to make out something more of this wreck, but that was all that was to be seen.

I took the smallest stone that we had in the boat, and tying a rope to it, told Charlie to let it down to the deck. He did so, and we found that it was over twenty feet.

“I was mistaken about that shore filling up, or if it is doing so it is at the expense of the sand about this distance. That ship never went down in twenty odd feet of water. The sand must have washed from under and about her, and made shore. She is farther out than I had estimated, but she is there just as I said she was. Here doubtless lies an untold story, for it is doubtful if her crew ever reached their homes. How few that take to boats on the Pacific are ever picked up or get to land. It is a dangerous undertaking and almost deters one from the risk. Perhaps the women, being naturally more cautious than men, are right. I believe, even though this craft should prove perfectly seaworthy, I will think twice before I take the risk.”

We drew our sail and away we went around the north side of the island, at a distance of over half a mile from shore. As we passed opposite to the Commodore's camp, we saw one of the men on their lookout. He evidently thought we were afloat from some wreck, for he waved his hands and then started to run in the direction of the camp. I remarked that I thought it was likely Herbert, and that he had gone to

tell the Commodore. "If they think we are adrift from a wreck they will expect us to land in the fish cove. Keep your eye on the shore there and see if they appear." Just as the ledge of rock on the east side of the cove was hiding the shore of the cove from our view, Charlie said, "There they are." They had arrived at the cove in time to see us just as we passed on to the eastward.

We rounded the island and came opposite to the ledge where we first landed. Loosening the sail and taking the paddle, I propelled the boat as nearly as possible in the same track we had followed. Charlie, leaning over the bow, looked into the sea. At length he said, "I see rocks, jagged rocks standing up all around. It must have gone down amongst them."

"We are just about over the spot, and I am afraid to go any nearer for fear of that rock that we first struck."

"There is a pointed rock just there a few feet to our left, only a little way below the surface; but we can ride over it safely."

"Then look a little further ahead and just to your left; that is where she went down."

I moved the boat very slowly, and as there was but little sea here under the lee of the island, he had a good opportunity of finding it if it had not gone to pieces.

"I see it," said Charlie. "Yes, that is it over there to the right. It has slipped down the side of a rock on its end; but it is very deep, I can but just discern it."

I pulled over to the place indicated and looked down into the sea. It took some time to get my eyes focused properly; but presently I saw it plainly enough, leaning as if wedged between two rocks at about forty degrees angle. We dropped our plummet and could not reach it in its highest point, and judged that it must be from thirty to forty feet deep.

We pulled out and sailed away. Wind had freshened a bit and we had a chance to see our craft work. The sea had not had a chance to rise yet, and we went on finely, holding her as close to the wind as possible.

After we had sailed away southward to a little distance from the island, Charlie, who was sitting in the bow of the boat, said in an excited manner, "Look! Herbert and the Commodore are on the hill watching us."

They had apparently not yet made out what it meant, and were keeping a close watch on our movements.

When we had reached a point from which we thought we could tack to our cove, we turned the bow for shore, and falling a little below the harbor, I loosened the sail and drove her in with the paddle.

We took up the sail and paddles and carried them to camp, leaving the boat well up out of the water.

She had scarcely made a drop of water and had worked very well, and we were highly satisfied with her; yet she did not inspire me with enough confidence in her for me to decide that she would answer for a sea voyage.

CHAPTER XXV.

Herbert's visit and apology—Plain language—My doubts—Raising the old boat—The Commodore's vengeance—I settle the bill—Illness of our enemies—My doctrine—Herbert's regrets.

NEXT day we were resting ourselves after our labors, and as Charlie and I were sitting and talking at the ship-yard over some plan to raise the old boat, we heard a male voice at the camp, and recognized it as Herbert's. We looked at each other in astonishment for a moment, for we had not met him since the "Waterloo," as I called it; then I said to Charlie, "Let us go to the camp."

When we reached the camp Herbert was standing in front of the two ladies, who were seated on chairs outside of their house. He turned and looked at me with a very doubtful expression on his face. I said, "Well, sir! Have you come on a peaceable errand?" He replied, "I have, indeed. I cannot stand things as they are any longer, and I have come to beg a thousand pardons for what I have done, and ask to be allowed to visit the folks here occasionally."

I told Charlie to go in and set the table and give Herbert something to eat. Then addressing Her-

bert, I said, "I will tell you where your trouble comes in. You are like a young criminal in bad company. The judge as a rule gives him a lighter sentence than the old thief. You would have been a better boy if you had not fallen into the hands of that old scoundrel, who tells you he was Commodore of a yacht club. I think it more likely he was captain of a fishing smack. You think your blood is bluer than other blood that is better than yours. You are naturally indolent and overbearing. These are characteristics that a man with a strong mind and force of character could overcome. We won't hold you responsible for these defects. You are not a young man to excite the admiration of any intelligent person. We are not disposed to punish you for that; it will bring its own punishment. Learn that you lack very little of being a natural born fool, and then you may learn something that will be useful to you in future. You may come here and see the residents of this camp, provided you don't prolong your visits to more than two hours, and don't make them more frequent than once a day. But you must not indulge in any of your unpleasant little tricks. Let us find one deviation from the path that a true gentleman would follow, and you will find yourself excluded from this camp quicker than a leper would be run out of society."

During this lecture he had stood mute and downcast. When I had finished he merely bowed his head in assent. "Now if you will come this way we will entertain you; we always treat our visitors hospitably, you know." He followed me to the house and was

invited to sit down and eat. He took his seat at the table, and I told Charlie to go to the milk house for something, and then following, whispered to him, "Should Herbert ask if we are going to leave the island, give him an evasive answer." I went around to the ladies and told them to do the same. "They saw us yesterday in our boat," said I, "and they fear that we are to go away and leave them on the island, and this is what has brought him here with his soft words. If he asks you, say that I have talked of it should the boat prove sufficiently seaworthy."

I went back again to where Charlie and I had been sitting at the ship-yard, and again sat down and began to think out a plan to raise the boat.

After a while Charlie came to me and said that Herbert had gone, and that he had inquired about our leaving the island, but had got no satisfaction.

Next morning I said to Charlie, "I will tell you how we will raise that boat. I have thought it all out. If we undertake to do it with our craft we will either sink it or capsize ourselves into the sea. We will make a good strong rope about fifty feet long, and I will take part of our iron bar and make a hook. This we will fasten securely to the end of the rope. Then we will carry eight or ten of those slim dry trees, about twenty or thirty feet long, to the cove, and laying them side by side bind all the ends firmly together. Across the middle of this raft we will lay a stout stick, and right through the centre drop our grappling hook. When the sea is at its calmest, we will tow this raft to the boat, and grapple it by hooking it under the gunwale.

We will then tow the raft with our boat. If the raft holds the boat up, we will tow the whole back to the harbor, but if the raft sinks we will cut our tow-rope and let it go. We must be sure to make our raft large enough and then we cannot fail. I may tell you that my own idea has been to secure that boat, and if she is not too badly broken up she can be made perfectly seaworthy, and I would not be afraid to tackle old ocean in her."

Charlie approved of the plan, and we commenced our preparations, working as fast as we could, while not neglecting our other work. The rice was ripe and every day we secured some of it, and filled it into our vessels; we were also laying in our stock of tea. Between our work of this kind we spun and twisted our rope, and carried the small trees to the cove for a raft and fastened them together.

Herbert came over almost every day, but we took care not to let him know anything as to our movements. It would have been better if we had told him all; but man is liable to make mistakes, and this was not my first one.

Our arrangements were completed, and one very calm morning we started out with our raft. We located the boat and got the raft over it. Charlie got on the raft and soon had the hook grappled into the boat. I held the end of the rope and pulled when Charlie instructed me to do so. Charlie then took the rope and pulled it taut, and twisted it about the stick in such way that it could not loosen. As the raft moved with the waves, we could see the boat move on

the rocks. Charlie got from the raft to the boat and I paddled out the length of our tow-rope. Charlie held the tow and I put my paddle in with all my might. The raft drew away and presently settled itself well in the water. I stopped paddling and turned back to the raft, and looking down into the water we saw the boat suspended.

"All right," said Charlie; "we may pull ahead." Taking quite a compass to avoid rocks we towed away, both using our paddles vigorously. We were about three hours in bringing our burden into port, and found it no small job to draw it to land after we got it into our harbor.

What was our disappointment, after all this labor, to find that it was so broken up as to be utterly useless. The keel was broken entirely in two and driven up about six inches in the centre, breaking a lot of the planking and ribs. This was likely done by the first rock that we struck. A large hole, nearly a foot across, was broken through a little aft of this break, just to one side of the keel, and most of the boarding was splintered.

With proper tools and appliances something might have been done to her, but with only an axe and a piece of iron, it was impossible to repair her. My disappointment was greater than I cared to confess.

The only thing left in her that would be really useful to us, the old iron excepted, was the glass. This was under the stern seat, and had not fallen out. The outside was ruined, but the frame would hold together and answer the purpose after a fashion. The sail had

been so long in the water that it was useless. I took all the iron off her and preserved it for future use.

A few days after we had secured the old boat, Charlie went down to the cove to capture a fish. In a short time he returned greatly agitated. The boat was broken all to pieces. Some one had turned it up-side down and had taken a large stone and pounded the sides out of it. I returned with Charlie to the cove and inspected the wreck. With the exception of the keel, posts and gunwales, the most complete job of smashing had been done. I looked at it, and a feeling of resentment that I cannot describe came over me.

"We made a mistake, Charlie. We should have told Herbert that we had no intention of leaving the island. You see how it is. The day after they saw us in the boat Herbert came to us as a spy, with soft, deceitful words. They made up their minds that we were preparing to leave the island and let them remain on it, and they have taken this means to frustrate our scheme. They ought to have known and did know that we could not all have left in that boat. It is a devilish act, and I swear will be repented."

We returned to camp and found Herbert there looking very sheepish.

I accosted him in a very firm voice, and demanded if he had taken any part in the destruction of our boat. He assured me most positively that he had tried to prevent the Commodore from doing it, and had absolutely refused to accompany him. The Commodore had said that it was one of my smart tricks to leave

them, and he would prove to me that I could not do it.

I sat for a few minutes in thought and then said, "I do not like these perpetual rows, and I admit that there may be some truth in what he says about his fearing that we were going to leave. It will not, however, do for us to allow acts of that kind to go unpunished, otherwise neither our goods nor property will be safe." Speaking to Charlie, I said, "Give Herbert something to eat, and he will stay here until I return, and I will then allow him to return to his camp."

The ladies and Charlie tried in vain to persuade me not to go over to the other camp. When I got there I kept my eyes about me, as I thought the Commodore might be lying in wait and expecting me. Not seeing him around I went to the door of the house, and looking in found him reclining on his bed. I entered, and he no doubt thinking it was Herbert, did not look up until I spoke.

"I have come to settle the bill for that boat," I said.

He sprang to his feet and tried to seize hold of a stick that leaned against the wall; but I was too quick for him. I did not spare him either physically or mentally, and when I left he was again reclining on the bed and was likely to remain there for a few days longer. Before leaving I stepped to the fire, and taking up a piece of charcoal, I returned and marked on the door in capital letters "Don't Forget."

When I returned to my camp I told Herbert to go and attend to his companion. He started at once, and did not return to our camp for several weeks.

I inquired if they had done as I told them about giving Herbert something to eat, and they said they had. I said, "That's right; I have no disposition to make an enemy of Herbert, and he probably gets very poor fare over there. Feed him every time he comes here. There are two parts that an Englishman likes to have well clothed—his stomach and his feet. We want Herbert's friendship, and it can be secured by the way of his stomach better than by any other road. The Commodore is beyond redemption, and the only way we can live as a neighbor of his, is by keeping him in fear. The Commodore is such an embodiment of selfishness and indolence that I cannot comprehend him. He seems to think it is the duty of every one to wait on him, provide for him and almost bow down to him. He imagines that it is his prerogative to command everybody, and it is their duty to obey. When I came to this island, if I had not had some independence in me, he would have placed me in the most abject slavery, and ordered me about in the most overbearing way. Then if I had not been his match physically, he would have beaten and knocked me about most unmercifully. I am thankful that I was able to assert my independence. He is nothing short of a cruel, unmannerly old brute, and must be kept under subjection. I greatly disliked having to go and chastise him in that cool way. It is foreign to my disposition to go into a fight in that deliberate manner, and I felt more like reasoning out the question than settling it by physical force. In fact, it is the first time I ever did it in that way. I

always want the sudden impulse that will not stop to reason; but this was a most aggravating thing, such a deliberate, fiendish act, that I felt if something was not done about it there would be repetitions that would be unendurable."

We had made a raft and given it to Herbert with which to gather rice, and he had gathered all that had been taken to his camp. The Commodore had never been seen by us on the swamp. As some days had passed without our seeing Herbert, I advised Charlie to go to the other camp and see how they were. Charlie went, and when he returned he told us they were both sick with the fever, and neither able to help the other.

I sent Charlie and the two ladies over with provisions and especially tea, telling them to give them plenty, and to find out if they had neglected to use it every day. They found it had been too much trouble for them to make the tea, and as they had no milk, they did not much care for it. I had great faith in the tea, and took good care that it was freely used by all in my camp. It was anti-bilious and would prevent and cure the fever that we were all subject to.

Every day for two weeks my companions visited the other camp regularly, and looked after the invalids until they were quite well. The tea soon broke up the fever, and good strong food did the rest.

I suggested to Charlie that we should complete their stock of rice and tea, and fill up a new vessel with either one or the other, and when he went over he could take it with him and place it amongst their

stores. When they were well again they would learn that we had not only nursed them, but had secured them a stock of such things as had to be procured in their season.

Was the Commodore grateful? Not by any means. He was irritable and cranky with those who waited on him, and when he was told that I had sent the provisions and given the directions that they were following in nursing him, he cursed me and said he would yet live to take my life.

When told how he acted I said, "I was instructed long ago in a doctrine something like this: 'If thine enemy hunger feed him; if he thirst give him drink, for by so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.' I have added to that—not by inspiration—If he doesn't feel that kind of coals give him a kind that he will feel. So far as taking my life is concerned, I do not doubt his willingness, and should not be surprised at any time to have him lie in ambush for me. He is just that kind of a serpent; but I will always keep one eye open for him."

As soon as Herbert was better he resumed his visits to our camp.

The first opportunity he got to speak to me, he expressed his gratitude for what had been done for them, and vowed that he would never again be a party to anything that would injure or annoy me. He said the Commodore was very bitter toward me, and that he had tried to reason with him about it, but to no purpose. The Commodore could not brook my being able to bid defiance to him and to humiliate him as I

had done. The Commodore didn't half as much mind my thrashing him as he did what he termed the infernally impudent lectures that I delivered when I got him under my thumb.

"Well, Herbert, when I get into the right spirit I like to deliver myself, according to the inspiration of the moment. If the Commodore will act the part of a man, he will not put me into that spirit, and will thus avoid both the thrashing and the lecture."

Things began to move on much as usual, our spare time being spent in the weave-house. Herbert came over nearly every day, and being much more friendly, would tell us about the Commodore's eccentricities. It was evident that Herbert was getting heartily sick of his companion, and only wanted the invitation to join our camp and leave the Commodore altogether. He got no encouragement in that direction.

One day while watching the process of cloth-making he glanced toward me and said to Mrs. Travers, "What blind fools we have been. There is not a comfort or convenience we have that he has not provided. His ingenuity has no limit. We all felt aggrieved when he was put into our boat, and thought it a great imposition, but how could we ever have got along without him. And yet I, for one, have done nothing but impose on him and annoy him. I am very sorry that I have been so blind. I will not repeat my past conduct toward him, and will try to explain to the Commodore, so that he will see it as I do now."

CHAPTER XXVI.

Monotony—The floating branch—My vow—The speck on the horizon—Is it land?—The branch shows life—The mysterious hand—Shaping a dug-out—Herbert comes as an envoy—My respects to the Commodore.

THINGS were going on in the old every-day way. The goats, the look-out, the spinner, the loom, sewing clothes and making hats—which were now plaited out of grass and sewed with thread—preparing food and eating it. Monotony; dull monotony. No sail, no hope.

I often proposed that I should go to sea, and risk it; but none of them would hear of it, and so things moved on.

Herbert always had the same complaints about the Commodore, who still acted as if he were proprietor of all things, and Herbert his servant. This did not suit Herbert, whose disposition was not unlike the Commodore's, as far as it went. He lacked the courage to resent the Commodore's treatment, which made him a poor specimen of a man. He thoroughly understood my contempt for him, but nevertheless delighted in getting into conversation with me.

I fancied that Charlie had told him of my parentage. The difference in his manner indicated this, and he was so ready to do homage to blue-bloodedness that he actually began to look upon me as his superior.

The ladies, too, acted very differently toward me and I thought it very probable that Charlie had told them, also. I could not, however, forget their treatment of me in the boat and when we first got on the island. I treated them all kindly, was perfectly free and frank about everything that pertained to the work, or to plans of escape; but—with very few exceptions—I never entered into familiar conversation with them. I told none of them, except Charlie, anything of my family history. None of them told me anything of their history except what Charlie told me of his place of residence and friendship for our neighbor at home.

I was getting heartily sick of the confinement. I was not in thorough sympathy with any of my companions. Charlie was the only one I could tolerate; but there was something lacking in him. He did not inspire me with respect. He lacked originality and had no inventive genius. When a plan was fully matured and explained to him, he was sure to fall in with it to its utmost extent. If he had been able to suggest improvements or additions, or had even opposed something for the sake of opposition, I would have liked him better.

One morning I went for a stroll. The day was fine and I wanted to bring a little variety into my life. I went to the hill, then visited the site of our first camp, then on to the cove where I had built a fish trap. I

had never visited this spot since I left the camp—now called the “Commodore’s camp.” I went down on the sand. The tide was out, and I stood where the waves washed the sand, and looked out to sea. Presently I saw something floating on the waves a little way out, and it attracted my attention. It was green in color and looked as if it might be a branch of a tree with very large leaves. I stood and watched it. Each wave brought it nearer. At last I could see that my conjecture was right; it was a branch. Wading into the sea a little I secured it, and bringing it with me to shore I saw that it was different from any tree that grew on the island. Where did it come from? It must have floated from some distant shore; but how far was that shore from our island? It was green and apparently with sap still in it; surely it could not be a very great distance to where that branch had grown. Perhaps, after all, there might be land nearer than we thought, and that land might be inhabited, and if we were upon it we might find some means of reaching our homes.

I made a vow. I would take this branch to our camp and plant it. If it grew I would leave the island in the direction it must have come from. If it died I would await events.

For many days the wind had blown from the northwest, and this branch must have drifted from that direction.

I returned to camp and planted the branch a short distance from the house in a northwesterly direction, and left it to speak to me and tell me my destiny.

I felt that this was sheer superstition, and was ashamed to own to the others what I had done; but every day I visited that branch to see if there were any signs of life on it.

During the afternoon of the same day that I found the branch I took the old glass and went to the hill. Taking my stand on the very highest point I scanned the horizon to the north, northwest and west very carefully. It might have been all imagination; but right away to the northwest I fancied I could see something that looked like a large log of wood afloat in the sea.

I marked out the line with stones on which I saw it, so that I could find the same point at another time.

It was likely a dark spot in the sky or a shadow on the sea from some cloud invisible to me.

I returned to camp and put away the glass and went on with my work as usual; but I would not like to admit how much I was influenced by that branch.

I would commune with myself in this way: "It's all superstition; there is nothing in it and I will be a fool indeed if I allow it to influence me. The branch has always been in water, having likely fallen in when broken from its tree, or been cast in before it had an opportunity to get dry, and is all but certain to grow; then why risk my life on such a result? But what took me there? By what impulse was I moved to do such an unaccustomed thing? How did I happen to go to that unusual spot at precisely the time that that branch appeared? What was I looking for, anyway?"

To all these questions I had no answer. It did indeed seem strange that I had been led to go to that strange spot at that particular moment, which had no attraction for me. It may be that I am being guided by a higher power, and as I have made my vow I will stand by it.

The next day I took Charlie with me to the hill-top. I gave him the glass, and walking to a spot at some distance, I told him to take the glass and look directly over my head and see if he could discover anything. He looked, took down the glass and wiped his eyes and looked again. "I declare," said he, "I do see something."

"What is it like?"

"A long dark spot."

"Yes, there is something there. It must be land in the distance," said I. "I am thinking very seriously of going to it; but I will tell you more by and by; meantime, say nothing to the ladies about it until I give you permission."

Why, I could not tell, but as often as I could do so, without exciting curiosity in the minds of my companions, I went to that branch and examined it carefully; but there was no sign of a bud. By and by an analysis of my feelings convinced me that I was disappointed that it did not appear to grow.

One day, while examining it I discovered a suspicious-looking little spot near the top on the northwest side of the branch. Every day this little lump enlarged a little; but not another sign of life could I see on the branch. At length this bud had so devel-

oped as to show unmistakably that a growth of some sort was forcing itself out at this spot.

Another trip to the hill revealed that same dark spot in the distant northwest, and I began to be convinced there was land there. I said to myself, "Can it be possible that we have been living here within sixty or seventy miles of land—perhaps inhabited land—and putting forth no effort to reach it?" Turning my glass in every other direction, I could discover nothing; but on looking toward the northwest again there was that indefinite dark object, apparently not more than a few inches above the horizon.

Still the growth on my branch continued, and my interest in it became more and more intense.

Everything was going on at its regular pace. We had spent over four years of the same monotonous life, and there was no sign of change, no hope of succor, no sail ever came in view, and the ladies were in despair. Many an hour was spent in weeping, many a day passed with scarcely a word being spoken, more than what was absolutely necessary in connection with the things that pertained to our living. Every one felt too sad to talk. Instead of getting accustomed to it this life was becoming more and more galling to all of us.

While I had many things engaging my attention and taxing my ingenuity to provide for life, I was too occupied to feel it so much; but for many months every day was alike, and the only changes that came were the changes of the seasons, and these were too gradual to be observed.

Herbert and the Commodore were living at the old camp. The Commodore had the same old feelings toward me, threatening that if he ever had the opportunity he would take my life. The more Herbert came to our camp the more his friendliness for me appeared to increase, and he said he and the Commodore had held several very hot discussions about me, but I distrusted Herbert. I felt he was not true, and would play the spy against me at any time.

Every day Herbert visited us, but brought no word of cheer or comfort with him to us. Often he would come and sit awhile, eat something and go, without speaking twenty words.

My branch had grown, but how slowly. That one single bud had put out a branch. From that branch fell a large leaf with irregular edges. The two sides of the leaf fell alike from the stem and hung almost together, like a ragged cloth hung from a line. So sickly was the growth that I felt like not looking upon it as a growth at all. I began to ask myself if this was what I meant when I said I would go if it grew. Did I not mean that if it sprang into vigorous life, I should go, and success would attend me?

One morning about nine o'clock I went out to look at the plant. Just before I reached it, I saw something that almost made my heart stand still. A creepy feeling went up and down my back, and I felt hot and cold flashes go over me. Why should it so affect me?

The sun was shining through the bushes on the branch, and the shadow of its leaf fell on the ground in clear dark lines, exactly the picture of a pointing

hand with its finger in the direction of the northwest. I examined it closely and not a single line was wanting to make the hand complete—not a line too much was there.

I went and called Charlie. He came out, and I showed him the shadow. Not knowing its significance he was greatly interested in it as something that might appear to be figured in a cloud, or the shape of a rock.

“Do you observe,” said I, “that that sickly leaf is the only thing growing on that branch and that it points to the northwest?”

“I see all that; but what has that to do with it?”

I then told him the history of the branch. How it came to me in the sea, the vow that I had made and the result that he saw before him. “Yesterday I was on the point of repudiating that sickly effort, but to-day it speaks and I will go. The omen is not good. It is too sickly to presage great success, but I feel sure it is success. That hand points me in the direction of that dark spot on the sea, and I will go. You can do without me now, until I return to fetch you. Provide for your charge faithfully and trust in God.”

The next morning I went again to see the branch, but the leaf had fallen off. It had done its work and had ceased to live. I took it up and carried it into the house and placed it in the pocket of my coat that I had put away to be worn if I ever got an opportunity of leaving the island.

When opportunity offered, I told Charlie of the fate of the leaf, and that I had a presentiment that though

there was no good fortune for me in the future I would get safely to inhabited land.

“Now,” said I, “we will set to and make up a lot of crockery, for that is needed whether I go or stay.”

That afternoon we began to bring over clay, and worked at it until we had a large quantity of crockery made. Amongst the lot, several flat-sided jugs, some larger and some smaller.

We then brought in a lot of pitch pine, and made a quantity of tar, and after tarring a lot of cord and rope I boiled the rest down into pitch for caulking.

I started out alone with my axe and searched the woods for a tree out of which to make the beginning of a dug-out. I determined to make something more substantial than the other one.

Finding a tree—the largest that I could get that was sound—I commenced working on it. I cut it off about twenty feet long, and cut off one side of it; then began to work out the other half. I drew marks to guide me in making it into the shape that I wanted it to eventually assume, and cut away all that I could trim off, to lighten it.

When this was done as far as I could do in the woods, I got Charlie to go with me to bring it out to the camp. We took a rope, which we tied around one end of it, and tied a stick to the other end of the rope, and getting behind this stick, he at one end and I at the other, we pushed like oxen on a yoke and dragged the log to camp.

As I could not go to sea until the fair weather sea-

son I was in no hurry about getting the boat completed, and consequently worked very leisurely at it.

One thing I had learned, that when I was fully employed I had less time to think of our condition and was not so unhappy. I found the same thing the case with the others. They were more disposed to talk and enjoy themselves when they had plenty to do. Consequently I determined to find something to do every day.

Herbert and the Commodore had got their clothing from our camp for over three years, and neither of them had offered to give a helping hand to gather hemp or break and hackle it, and Charlie began to complain. The complaint reached them; how I do not know, and there was bitter feeling between Herbert and Charlie about it before I knew anything of the trouble.

Herbert came to me one day in a very angry mood, wanting to know why their supply of clothing was to be cut off. I told him it was the first time I had heard of it, and I would inquire; but I presumed the honey bees were getting tired of the drones.

“Now, Herbert, let me talk calmly to you. What right has anyone on this island to do anything for you when you won’t do anything for them? You are as healthy and as strong as any of us. You should always be ready to do your share, and more than your share of the work. Instead of that you do nothing for anyone in this camp, although they do a great deal for you. It is no wonder they are tired of it. Why don’t you turn in and gather hemp, and help break and hackle it, and earn your clothing? You cannot expect

Charlie to do it all for you, and you will not have me very long, for it is my firm determination to leave this island though I should be lost at sea."

"I have a great deal of work to do for the Commodore, and I think it ought to be considered."

"I think not. Does the Commodore do anything for you or for the others?"

"No; he does nothing, or so little I may call it nothing."

"Then I will tell you what to do for a week. Rise early every morning and come to our camp and get your breakfast. Help Charlie to work at the hemp and don't return to your camp until after supper, and leave the Commodore to cook his own food and wait on himself and see how he likes it."

"All right; I will try it."

Next morning Herbert was on hand, and for several days he kept this up. He was of very little use to us; but then he was schooling the Commodore.

One morning he failed to turn up, and I wondered whether it was through indolence or the influence of the Commodore.

About ten o'clock he came along looking very sheepish. He said he had come for the Commodore's glass that we had got out of the boat.

"Go back and tell the Commodore that he cannot have the glass. I intend to keep it, because it never was the Commodore's glass; but was put into our boat by the captain of the 'Watchword' for the use of the crew. Besides, I secured the glass by fishing up the wrecked boat, and so by virtue of the law of salvage

it becomes my property. The Commodore will never get the glass. Why did you not come to work to-day?"

"Oh, the Commodore raised an awful row and forbade me to come here any more. He says I must not visit here at all, and threatens me with all sorts of things if I do. He sent for the glass, and said when he had got it there would be no more communication between us. He says you are trying to lead me away from him as you have done with the others, and swears by the eternal that you shall not accomplish it. He declares that you shall never leave this island; that he will move heaven and earth to prevent your escaping the vengeance he has in store for you. I am greatly afraid that he will take some means of injuring you, and I warn you to be on your guard."

"Now, Herbert, I think you must be convinced that I sometimes tell the truth. I told you that you lacked character and mind and wanted very little of being an outright fool. I now tell you that you don't lack the little that I then gave you credit for. You are a poor, silly simpleton. Go back and be a slave to the Commodore. Live and die in bondage; you are not fit for any other position in life. Tell the Commodore when he threatens me again that I have no fear of him. There are no pistols on this island, and when he attacks me he has to come within my reach, and I will always be ready to meet him. I am going to leave this island next season, Commodore or no Commodore, and I am going to take that glass with me."

Herbert left, and we did not see him again for many weeks.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A stone keel—Completing my boat—Provisioning for my voyage—Herbert the spy—We launch the boat—Loading the supplies—Good-by to the ladies—My last night on the island.

I CONTINUED at my boat, without neglecting my other work, and took great pains with it. At last I had the log that we had brought from the woods completed, except the keel. One day I asked Charlie if he remembered the flat, slaty stones, in layers, over at the old camp, and he said he did.

“I want a strip of that stone,” said I, “about ten feet long, two inches thick and about eight or ten inches wide. The kind of boat that I am going to build will not be as steady in the water as I want it, and I must put a heavy stone keel to it, that will make it self-righting.”

“Won’t it make it self-sinking, too?”

“I am glad to hear you say that. I like to find that you have an idea about it. Yes, it will make it self-sinking; but I will make it self-rising as well. I have thought of all that. Will you go with me and help me carry such a stone?”

“I will go gladly, if you think we can do so without getting into trouble with the Commodore.”

“I will risk that.”

I took a piece of my iron bar and squared the end, something like a stone cutter's tool, and hardened it in goats' grease. This I carried with me along with the hammer and axe to the raft, and Charlie and I crossed the swamp. We made straight for my old hut, and I showed him the stone I wanted. I soon made some wedges of wood and drove them between the layers and broke off a piece. Then with my chisel I began to knock off small pieces until I got it to about the size that I wished.

While we were working at it the Commodore came from his house and ordered us off. He stood at a respectful distance, and when we made him no answer he took up stones to throw at us, but changed his mind. He then shook his fists at us and made all sorts of threats, but as we paid no heed to him he went back to the house and blackguarded Herbert.

We got the stone so reduced that we could carry it, and taking it up, one at each end, we returned to the raft and then to camp.

I took this stone and marked it out the shape that I wanted it, and then knocking off little by little with my iron chisel, I reduced it to the marks. When completed I should judge it weighed between one hundred and fifty and two hundred pounds. This would make a very formidable keel, and would give the boat great solidity in the water.

The shape of this stone was about two inches in

thickness, eight in width and about ten feet long. The front end I cut at an angle of about fifty degrees, and left the back end square.

I had not made any keel on the bottom of the dug-out, so I fitted the wood to this stone. Then I burned five pairs of holes, immediately beside the stone, one on either side, clear through the boat. Then I fitted beveled pieces of wood to the sides of the stone, to keep it steady. Having got the keel and its side strips fixed, I carried them into the house and laid them away until I should want them.

I had my boat building just outside my house, so that if any noise should be made in the night, I could hear it readily. I was afraid the Commodore would try to destroy it if he could get the chance.

I went to the woods and searched for trees out of which to make additions to the top of the boat. The log from which I had made the bottom was something over a foot in diameter. I had got a bottom out of this of about eight inches in depth and had worked it out about six inches. I wanted to add fourteen to sixteen inches to the sides, and make the boat from twenty-two to twenty-four inches deep. I got four pieces out and carried them to the house and fitted two on either side, on top of each other, and cut them out to the shape of the boat. It was not easy finding them, for they required to have a bend or spring in them, so as not to be too cross-grained near the ends.

It took some time and careful work to fit them, as the insides required to fit rather tight and the outsides

a little open, so that I could caulk them properly. At last they were fitted and numbered and ready to put in their places.

How to fasten them securely on the boat and each other, was at first a problem; but I struck the plan of burning holes in pairs; one through the boat an inch or so from the top, and a corresponding one through the addition. Then a short piece of tarred rope with its ends put into these holes and fastened with plugs driven through the hole to tighten them would do the job. I tested this on two pieces of wood, and found that the wood would split before they would yield a particle.

I fitted these additions and burned these holes, a pair at about every foot, and burned the holes for pins through the ends. I laid them on top of my house until wanted.

My rudder was easily fitted on by using irons that I got off the old boat. I also took the iron keel or shoe from the old boat and bent it to go under my stone keel, and nail to the wood of the boat at each end with nails made from the old iron.

My boat was now ready to be taken to the water in pieces, and I laid it away until the last minute.

I made two bundles of reeds larger in the centre than a man's leg, to extend the entire length of the boat. I plugged up the hollow ends of the reeds to keep the water from getting into them, and tied them very firmly together with tarred cords. I put the large ends in the middle and made them taper to the ends. Having got them solidly tied together, I sewed them

up in tarred cloth. These I intended to fasten securely to the outside of the boat, one on either side, just above water mark. They would keep the boat from rolling, and would also protect its occupant from some of the water that might dash over it. They would also keep the boat from sinking should it become filled with water.

The timber from which I had made the boat was of the softest kind that I could get on the island, and now that it was thoroughly dry it was very buoyant. The only thing that could cause the boat to sink was its keel. I believed, however, that I had fully overcome this danger, and that if the craft were full of water and loaded with a man and provisions, it would still float. Also, if it were waterlogged, that keel would keep it right side up.

I prepared two bulkheads to go in the boat and made them so they would be quite or nearly watertight. The first bulkhead included all in front of the mast. I intended that space should be entirely empty. The aft bulkhead would be about six feet from the stern and would be the extent of my promenade. I knew that if I were many days at sea I would suffer greatly from want of exercise, and this space, in which I could also lie down to sleep, would afford a little walk for me.

I prepared goat skins that had been soaked in fat, to be fastened firmly over the top of the front part of the boat, and fitted a web of tarred cloth to cover the entire boat, so that if a wave should strike it, it would shed the most or all of the water.

The next and almost the last thing that I had provided was a sunshade, made of a piece of hemp cloth, to be put on upright reeds, set in holes burned in the top edge of the boat.

With all these in their places, I could not see how the boat could come to grief so long as I kept to open sea; but I might not be able to weather a big storm.

I now began to put my provisions in shape. Two jugs of dry rice, a quantity of boiled eggs, rice bread, two jars of packed kid—that is, fried kid packed in grease—two jars of curd cheese, a small jar of tea, and about sixty quarts of water in my flat-sided jugs. All these except the water I packed and had ready to convey to the boat.

The season was now approaching when I was likely to have the best weather, and I concluded to get my craft put together and ready for sea by about the first of October—according to my calendar.

The Commodore had not given us any annoyance, and Herbert had only visited us once in a while. This we knew was simply to find out what was being done toward my getting ready to leave.

I gave instructions that if Herbert came to the camp in my absence, they were to say that I had gone to the woods. “For,” said I, “when Herbert reports that I am working at my boat, the Commodore will play some of his abominable tricks and create trouble.”

I carried a quantity of green boughs to the cove and fitted up a bower in which to sleep, so that I should not leave the boat unprotected while it was

being constructed, and I arranged with Charlie that one of us would be there all the time. Charlie also proposed that he should sleep with me at the cove, and I was thankful for his company.

It had been some time since Herbert had visited us, and I thought it better not to move the parts of the boat until he should come again. If he went back and reported to the Commodore that there were no signs of the boat being put together, the Commodore would rest contented for some days, during which time I could get away.

We waited three days. When Herbert came I was sitting in front of the house. He talked awhile to the women, then came on to our house. He strolled around, passed some meaningless remarks, cast his eye to the roof, looked at the bottom of the boat, then he said, "You are not getting ready to go yet? I should think this was a good time to start." I replied, "I find that Cruikshank's almanac predicts a big storm within the next two weeks, and I thought I would wait until it was over. It will do no harm to have the season well advanced."

After loitering around for some time he strolled off toward his camp.

I said to Charlie, "Follow that sneaking spy a little way and see what he does. Take the axe with you, and if he sees you, you can cut some boughs and bring them back with you."

Charlie was as much disgusted with Herbert's ways as was I, and without a word he walked away after him. He soon returned and said the Commodore

was waiting for him amongst the bushes, but he did not think either the Commodore or Herbert saw him.

“Well, Charlie, I shall be lucky if I get away without trouble with that old villain; and I fear for you when I am gone. Don’t be afraid of him, Charlie. You could easily master him. You must not let him impose on you.”

We were soon carrying the material for the boat to the cove, and by night it was all there.

Next morning work began in earnest. The keel was fastened to the boat, tarred ropes were passed up under it through the holes, and plugs driven in firmly by the sides of the ropes; then the ends of the ropes were pinned fast in other holes. Then the beveled pieces were pinned fast, and the iron keel fitted on and nailed at both ends.

By noon this had been done, and the keel was a firm, substantial affair.

During the afternoon we put on the sides and pinned them fast with pieces of tarred rope. Next day we caulked the joints, and gave the whole outside a coat of pitch, and got the boat ready to float. We then put her into the water to see where her water line would come, and found her very steady with the stone keel. She was rather more buoyant than I had estimated, which I was not sorry to find. We both got into her—which would be nearly the weight she would have to carry—and marked her water lines; then took her out and continued our work.

We put in the bulkheads and tarred and caulked them, put up the mast and fixed it firmly so that it

could not get misplaced, and rested for the night. We were getting along so nicely that if the Commodore only left me alone, two or three days would see me afloat.

With boarding that we got off the old "Watchword" boat, we covered in the front of our boat to the first bulkhead, and covered it over with the oiled goat-skins, fastening them to the sides with tiny pegs driven into the boat. Then we put over this the tarred cloth and fastened it firmly to the sides of the boat as far as this bulkhead. We placed other boards over the second or middle bulkhead, fastening them down a little over half the way, and covering and securing with the skins and cloth, fastened permanently over the top for about half the length of the boat. The remainder we hooked to pegs driven into the outside edge of the boat in a declining position through eyelets made in the cloth. The web was then made tight by shoving one of the paddles under it on top of the cross boarding. This also served to give the top pitch so as to make it shed water easily.

We followed this up by securely tying the bundles of reeds to the sides, and the boat was ready to receive my supplies. We launched the boat and were perfectly satisfied with it in every respect.

We carried my supplies down and stored them in the centre and drew the cloth over it. Everything was now in the boat, and it was ready for sea. I changed my clothes and put on my old suit. With the ring that I had found in the old hut and the dead leaf of my "wizard's branch," as I called it, in my pocket, I

took the glass in my hand and went to bid the ladies farewell.

Much as I wanted to leave the island, there was something very sorrowful in bidding good-by to the old camp in which I had spent nearly six years. The goats seemed to know that something unusual was going to happen and hung about me more closely than ever. Everything seemed to grow dear to me.

The ladies wept profusely, although they expected that I would return in a few days, or weeks at most.

"Well," I said, "we have seen the land and I will try to reach it. If it is inhabited by civilized beings, I will bring you relief. If it is not, then we will be none the worse for the effort, should I get back all right. If I am lost, Charlie knows how to run everything, and you will be as comfortable as possible, under the circumstances. Good-by."

My eyes overflowed in spite of my effort to be calm, as I walked to the cove. Every little way I turned and looked at the camp until the ridge hid it from my sight. A horrible feeling would creep over me, but I attributed it to the fear that I felt at the great risk I was running. Then I was such a miserable sailor I expected to suffer greatly from seasickness. Then leaving seemed like going from the known into the unknown. I was leaving at least three friendly faces; but what was I to meet? Perhaps a shark's teeth, a watery grave, or worse—be served as a dainty morsel for a savage people, who found it even harder to procure subsistence than we had done on our comparatively barren island.

Charlie was at the cove awaiting my arrival. He said, "I have been thinking your boat all out, and it is most ingenious and complete. I don't see how it can fail to take you to some place, if you are able to hold out, even though you miss the land that we have seen."

"Charlie, I have more faith in the boat than I have in myself. You know what a bad sailor I am. If I am very sick for a long time it may wipe out my life. I must tell you now, I am leaving this island with the intention of reaching that dark spot yonder. If I knew that it was a spot where Christians live I would go with a light heart; but it may be a barren spot uninhabited and cheerless, or it may be the home of cannibals. I do not wish to excite any apprehension in your mind, for I want you to always think of me as safe and happy; but I cannot forget the chances I am running, nor can I account for a feeling of horror that creeps over me. If I find there is no relief for us in that dark spot, I will go on until I find something or die. I have plenty of provisions for sixty days. I can spin it out to seventy if necessary, and if I keep afloat that long I don't see how I can fail to find some help. I have in my belt enough money to hire a boat to come for you from that dark spot; and if I get any help there you will see me again inside of a month. If I am not back by that time, conclude that I have gone further."

Charlie's heart was almost bursting, and he sat down and cried like a child. I don't know that there is a man in the world who could have done otherwise.

For some time not a word was spoken. The night was dark and the sea moaned in the crevices of the rocks, and still we sat. Then I asked him if he would watch while I tried to sleep. He said, "I would much rather watch than sleep, I feel so sad."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

*A frightful dream—A still more frightful reality—
Have I killed the Commodore?—Good-by to Charlie
—I leave the island—That awful head—The last of
the island—My voyage—A steamer—Land!—The
end of my voyage.*

I CROUCHED down under the side of the bushes while Charlie sat just in front of me on the ground. After a long time I fell into a sort of doze and began to dream a frightful dream. Some demon with fiery eyes was chasing me with a club, with a knob on it as large as the hill on the island. I ran and dodged, and dodged and ran, until I was out of breath, but he caught me as I turned in another direction and brought the terrible club down on my head with a sound like thunder, and I fell. With a yell I sprang to my feet, and was horrified to see a heavy club descending upon Charlie's prostrate figure. I sprang forward, caught the club and wrenched it from the hand that held it. Quicker than lightning I raised the club and brought it down with crushing force upon the head of the would-be murderer.

All this passed before I fully realized that I was

awake, and that it was not a dream, but a terrible reality.

The Commodore had learned in some way that I was preparing to start from the island. Was there a traitor in the ladies' house? Whether there was or not, he had made up his mind to carry out his threat of murdering me.

Seeing Charlie sitting and very likely dozing in the darkness, he must have taken him for me. He aimed a murderous blow; but missing the head, struck the shoulder and knocked Charlie on top of me. He was in the act of striking another blow, when I grasped hold of the club. How I got out so quickly is a mystery; nor do I know how I succeeded in catching the club. I only know that it was done. When I fully recovered myself I saw my enemy lying on the ground. I turned to help Charlie. I found that he was badly hurt. Paying no heed to the prostrate form, I examined Charlie's injuries and found the side of his head grazed with the blow, and his shoulder seriously bruised. He was able to stand and move. "Thank God," said I, "that you were not killed for me."

Turning to examine the Commodore, who was lying perfectly still, I turned him over, but saw no signs of life. My blood stood still. I felt his pulse; not a flutter! I became fully convinced that he was dead. I fell to the ground; whether I fainted or not I do not know. I roused myself and looked at my victim, and the awful iron went into my soul. In my agony I cried, "Oh, my God, I am a murderer! Why was I

permitted to live to see this awful day. Oh, my poor mother! Your son's hands are red with blood. He can never meet you in that blessed abode where only the pure in heart enter. Oh, God, forgive me!"

The deathly paleness of that dead face as it lay in the half moonlight, sent the most awful horror through my heart. It looked so ghastly. It sent a chill through my veins that the suns of succeeding years have never warmed out of them.

Charlie groaned with his pains, and I groaned with horror. The moon was creeping up over the hill and throwing its sickly rays on that dead cold face, and it drove me almost mad. I did not know what to do, and Charlie needed attention. I could have jumped into the sea to hide that sight from me.

Charlie wanted to go to the house, and I said, "Yes, go to the house and I will jump into my boat and go to sea. Yes, to the bottom of the sea; anywhere out of this world. Send for Herbert to take his dead companion's body and bury it. I must go." Seizing Charlie by the hand I cried, "Good-by, Charlie. God bless you. Pray for me as long as you live, for I will never see another happy hour. May God send you deliverance; it is not likely you will ever see me again, everything has changed so within the last hour. Good-by! Good-by!"

Then looking upward I said, "Oh, my God, I commit myself to thy care and to thy sea."

Taking up the glass I turned to descend to the cove and caught one more glance of that ghastly face. Another terrible chill shot through my frame. I

rushed down the descent, unfastened the ropes that held my boat to the temporary floating pier, jumped in, and seizing one of the paddles, made it flash in the water, and putting forth all my strength, shot my boat through the gap and out to sea.

I never stopped to draw my sail until I was far past the west end of the island. I worked like an automaton, and was almost ready to faint with weariness before I realized what I was doing.

The moonlight had given place to daylight, and the sun was showing the bright place from which he was presently to come forth. I was about two miles from land, and I set the sail to catch a gentle breeze, turning the bow of the boat to the northwest and glanced toward the island. Yes, there it was. The hill rose above it exactly the shape of the Commodore's brow. Indentations or shadows nearer the base formed the eyes, the rest of the island fashioned itself into the remainder of the face, the whole wearing that ghastly look. This awful head just stood above the sea, as the head of a swimmer might stand above the water. I fancied it was approaching me. I could not take my eyes from the sight. I felt that I must die where I stood, that I could not live another moment.

The sun had just lifted its round form out of the sea. Turning my gaze from that terrible island which still seemed to follow me, I looked at the sun, and there in that red, fiery ball was drawn in flaming lines that same horrible face. It seemed to grin and spit out fire at me. It was terrible. It was more than I

could bear. With a desperate effort I drew my eyes away and sat down in the boat.

I found that the boat had left its course, but I soon changed it to the point of hope, the northwest, and looking in that direction, determined not to turn my eyes again to see what was behind me.

Look where I would, there was that awful face, right in front of me. If I shut my eyes it became more vivid, and so I kept them open and in the direction of my course.

The sun had climbed to the meridian, a fair breeze had blown all the forenoon, and I thought I had gone to a distance almost sufficient to have passed out of sight of the island, and I turned to take a last look at it. A small, dark spot was visible above the sea. Taking the glass I could see quite distinctly the top of the hill.

Then I said, "Good-by, my little island home; good-by forever. Good-by, my companions all; but twice good-by, my dear Charlie. I had learned to love you more than I knew, but good-by forever. You know me no longer as a true friend, but as a murderer. We can never meet again."

Again I sat down in the boat and fixed my eyes on the quarter of hope. Presently I realized that I was thirsty, and took a good long drink. Then I said, "I must not allow myself to grow faint, I must eat," and taking some rice bread and cheese I filled my mouth, but could not swallow it and was forced to throw it into the sea.

All that afternoon I sat almost motionless, and the

wind having freshened, the boat moved on smoothly, rising and settling gently with the waves. I scarcely thought at all. I seemed in a maze. The sun was in the west, and I began to waken to the fact that I was on my way to an island which lay ahead of me and ought to be in sight by the aid of the glass. I had been out thirteen or fourteen hours. I should have made forty miles, at about three miles an hour. I ought to see that land.

Taking the glass I stood in the boat and looked intently in front and then to the right and to the left, but not a speck was visible. Then I turned all the way around, but nowhere was a single speck in view. Water, only water, and I alone on this vast waste. My little boat seemed smaller than ever and I felt that my end was near.

I took another drink and forced a little food down my throat, and then sat down again with my hands on the rudder cords.

All day the wind had blown from the southwest and I had held well on my way. I continued on the same course until sunset, and the wind fell.

Loosening the sail, I lay down in the boat and tried to go to sleep. My head ached as if it would split, and it was a long time before I could sleep. That horrible face was before my eyes, and when I slept, unpleasant dreams troubled me.

When I awoke the sun was just rising. I could scarcely realize where I was. I looked around, but nothing was to be seen except the sea. There was scarcely a breath of wind. I bathed my face, took a

drink and then ate my breakfast, walked up and down my boat a few times to start my blood, and then sat down in my seat. I took up the glass and looked carefully over every inch of the horizon. Nothing.

I believe a more miserable man than I was never breathed. Added to my other troubles there came to me the most awful sense of loneliness. I had not thought of this in my calculations of trouble; I had thought a feeling that I was going home would keep me up; but no, that hope shed such feeble rays that I scarcely realized its effects. Alone, alone, alone! A vast sea spreading away on all sides; I became filled with fear. I could feel my scalp crawl on my head, and I felt sick! Should I turn back? No, no, a thousand times no. Much better spring into the sea and forget everything in death. Would not that be the best ending, after all—my sorrows all buried and forgotten? Was life worth the living? Was there any joy before me that could repay me for all this sorrow? If I dropped into the water, a few seconds of time and all would be over. There is not a soul on earth to know, none to record it or shed a tear; would it not be best?

I was just becoming reconciled to this reasoning when a movement attracted my attention; looking into the water, I saw, not twenty feet away, a villainous shark, moving cautiously along and casting most affectionate glances at me.

In a moment I had changed my mind. I wanted to live—most intensely.

The wind was beginning to rise; I tightened the sail,

and concluded that a little exercise would do me good. Seizing a paddle I worked vigorously for about an hour.

The wind continued to freshen and my boat was making the waves ripple under its bow. I laid down the paddle and held the boat to its work.

At midday I again searched the horizon with my glass, with the same results as before.

I took something to eat and drink, and then turned my attention to making the most speed that I could get out of my craft. The wind increased to a good breeze and held on well, and I was making very fair speed for such a small vessel. She worked admirably. I was greatly pleased with her and watched critically her every movement.

Keeping the course by the sun as well as I could, I held on my way, taking up my glass every little while to discover that dark spot, but no spot appeared.

Night came on ; the wind fell, but did not cease. I held on my course, steering for a star, and when it was nearly set, I would take another higher up in the sky, and follow it in the same way.

As the morning neared I grew very sleepy ; so loosening my sail I lay down and slept.

When I awoke the sun was up and the wind was freshening, still from the same quarter. No sign of land. I began to consider what it meant. Was it part of a direction ? A providence leading or a destiny guiding ? There certainly was no land where both Charlie and I were sure we saw something besides water. Might not the object have been some old float-

ing hulk, water-logged and abandoned? Come to think of it, the appearance was not unlike that of a wreck. Why did we not think of that before? Fate has started me on this journey—a strange, sad fate. I will trust it and go ahead. Come what will, I will be prepared for it. The more swiftly I sail, the more quickly my journey will end; so I will make all the speed I can.

The wind increased, and I kept on my course, holding her bow to the northwest. She flew through the water until I could hear that peculiar swishing sound that is left in the wake. Higher and higher rose the wind. A reckless spirit possessed me, and I held her steady and said, "Let the wind blow." Toward evening the sea was getting unpleasantly high and I was too much in the trough. I changed my course a little to the north. She rode the waves easier, and I held her on. Once in a while a wave would strike her side and break a little over her; but she sat steady, and the water fell off the tarred cloth. I ate, and then placed some food and drink under the stern seat. I tied down the coverings all around me and elevated the centre of the tarred cloth by slipping a paddle under it.

Ready for the night, I sighted a star and steered by it, changing as the star changed, and so kept on all through the dark night.

Was it lonesome in the day-time, sitting alone in the midst of the ocean? It was ten times more so in that dark night, when a slight mistake in guiding my little boat might bring disaster and death. The phosphor-

escent waves flashed and seemed terrible to me; but my steady little craft held on her way.

How was it that I was not seasick? It was no doubt owing to the excitement. Let it continue; to be sick now might mean death. I would not think of it; I would only think of the land toward which I was steering.

I had calculated by the sun's shadows that our island was between ten and fifteen degrees south of the tropic of Capricorn. The Friendly Islands were about two degrees north of that tropic. Allowing for their distance west of us, about one thousand miles ought to bring me to one of those islands, if they lay in my course. At forty miles a day I should reach them in about twenty-five days. I had made up my mind that the Friendly Islands were my destination, and sat there in my boat on that dark night trying to employ my mind with thinking out what I would do when I reached them, for the purpose of trying to keep that terrible loneliness off my heart.

Fiercer and fiercer blew the wind; the waves splashed over my boat and against me. I was wet through, but still that feeling of hurrying on possessed me. Further and further from the scene I flew, feeling that I would outrun the spectre.

Then I thought of home, and a great mountain black as night rose up before me. I could never go home. My hands were stained with blood. What would my father say if he were living? "My son and a murderer!" What my poor dear mother? She would die of grief and shame. What my noble-hearted honora-

ble brothers, and true and loving sisters? No, no! I can never go home. The mark of Cain is upon me. I am driven out from the face of my friends, if not from the face of God.

Then I thought of the rescue. Charlie knows who I am. If I send them a rescuing party and they are saved, he will tell what I did, and it will come to the ears of my friends and they will know that I am a murderer. What can I do about it? I will leave it undecided, and trust to God for direction, if I ever get safe to land. But I am to get safe to land. Did not that leaf, now faded in my pocket, tell me plainly to go? And who has power to make a leaf to grow but God? Who, then, but God pointed me to the northwest, and spoke as plainly as nature can speak, "Go?" Have I not obeyed? Now that God has guaranteed me His protection, let the wind blow, He will preserve me.

The morning dawned, and still the wind blew. I kept the covering well down over my craft and she was riding the waves grandly. I took up the glass, but no sign of land or object could be seen. A light breakfast and a drink, and still at the helm. I drew a little west of north and flew over the waves.

On, on, all day. My legs were cramped and my body pained me with weary sitting; still on she went, the wind rather increasing than decreasing. But my glass could not reveal anything.

The sun set, the wind slackened; but all night I stood to the sail and moved on to the northwest. The sea took a long swell that made me feel sick for the

first time. The waves no longer broke on my craft, and I loosened the covering and slipped partly into a reclining position, and kept my eye on the star. It died out in the coming light, the wind went down and I loosened the sail and slept.

It was nearly noon when I awoke and the sun was shining on me. I arose, put up the awning and after bathing and eating, for I was very hungry, I drew up my sail and moved along slowly.

Each day brought some wind—sometimes as much as my little bark could stand—and whether it came by day or night, I made the most of it. I ate my meals regularly, I paced the bottom of the boat, I yawned, I wept, I speculated, I hoped, I prayed, I feared, and the weary days went by. No sail, no land, I had almost said no hope. Each day I had made a notch in the edge of my boat. These notches counted thirty, and yet no land in sight.

I must have gone either too far north or too far south. I must have passed the Friendly Islands.

The wind arose to a gentle breeze that was giving me not more than two miles an hour. I was wearied to death. I took up my glass and looked to the west, northwest, north, northeast; bringing it around very slowly and observing every inch of horizon. “What’s that? Surely that is something.” No, nothing there. The wind was straight from the west, and I was holding to it as close as possible. I touched the helm and made for the spot where I felt sure I had seen something. With my glass in hand, I sailed on gently and watched the spot. “Ha, there is something.” It

rises higher and fades. "As I live, the smoke from a steamer!" I put in the paddle and took a straight course for the east, and propelled my little craft ahead. My heart stood in my mouth. The streak of smoke was visible to the naked eye. It moved on in front of me, and in an hour had passed me and was going on to the south. My heart sank within me as I saw it was too late.

I turned to the north and let my boat move along. Then I began to think. "That is a steamer going from Hawaii to Auckland. If I had hailed her and she had taken me on board, she would likely have taken me back to New Zealand, where I must have told the story of the 'Watchword' and the castaways. They would have been rescued and I would be known to be a murderer. God be praised! I am saved from that fate. But there is her course, and it is mine to safety and to land."

Eleven more monotonous days, eleven more notches, with sometimes a good breeze and sometimes no breeze — a weary round of life.

The morning of the twelfth day dawned, the breeze freshened considerably, and I steered my craft due north all day, and not a speck in sight. The night looked rough, the wind did not fall with the evening, and I covered down my cloth. All night the wind blew and I flew on at a good pace. Weary watching ends with morning. The day dawned, the breeze had slackened, and I ate something before the light was fully upon the sea, for I was hungry. Then I took up my glass. "Hold!" my breath fairly stopped. Right

straight ahead of me, visible to the naked eye, was land! Yes, there it was, and I shouted for joy.

For the moment I forgot every trouble of my life. I stood up and stamped my feet, to get life into them so that I would be able to walk. Then I thought, suppose I get wrecked in landing, I must have something to eat in my pocket; so I filled my clothes with all the provision I could stuff into them. Then I stamped again, for I could not sit still. How slowly the boat moved, how light the wind. I looked at the shore; it looked fearfully monotonous—no cove, no harbor, no signs of life. It might be barren land after all.

I was too eager to land to keep my head, and I came very near going straight on shore, when I happened to think that I had better coast along a short distance to find signs of life. I ran to the east for a while, but I could stand it no longer; and seeing a sort of cove, ran in and loosened my sail. I took up my paddle and moved along, and seeing a spot that looked as if there was a dry creek bottom I ran right into it. The waves bumped the boat two or three times and I tried to get out into the water, but fell headlong. My legs refused to work nimbly. A wave went over me, and I got on my hands and knees and crept ashore. The boat turned side on and was washed a little higher on the beach.

CHAPTER XXIX.

*First night on land—I follow a path—The black boy—
The black man—An exchange of hats—The country
store—In the Fiji Islands—Samoa to San Francisco
—My hunt for work—Always that face—Lord Kil-
raine—The vision.*

I GOT out of the reach of the waves and sat for some time, wondering what to do. My boat was beating on the sand with every wave. I got up and tried to walk; but found it difficult. I tried to pull my boat ashore; but only succeeded in getting it in a short distance; but as the tide was setting out it would not suffer for a day. I got a small jug of water and some more food, and taking a paddle in my hand for a staff, started for a ridge that ran along about half a mile from the shore. After a weary struggle I reached its top, and a little way in from the brow of the bank came to a path—not much used—but still a path, and in that path the track of a horse that had gone eastward.

It was now the middle of the afternoon, and as I was not able to walk any distance, I began to consider what I had better do. I decided to follow a little way

after the horse's tracks, and if I did not discover anything, return to the boat and stay all night. I went on slowly, and after following for an hour saw no change in the appearance of the path. I accordingly went back to the boat, which was now high and dry, ate and drank, took off the sail, and rolling myself up in it, lay down on the shore and fell asleep.

In the morning I ate my breakfast, and putting fresh food into my pockets, I took a small jug of water and commenced my journey eastward along the path. It was nearly ten o'clock and I had not seen a sign of life. Of course my pace was slow, and I may not have gone more than five or six miles. The path turned abruptly to the north for a mile or two and merged into a more frequented path going in the same direction. I soon met a black boy, but scarcely knew how to address him. Then I thought I should first ask him if he could speak English. He knew what I meant, and pointed down the path as much as to say, "There is some one farther on who can." I followed the path, fearing I should meet an Englishman who would wonder at my hat and general appearance, and ask questions that I would not care to answer; for I had determined not to say anything about the castaways, and I knew that if I told that I had come from a strange island, curiosity would be aroused that would not be easily allayed.

About half a mile further down the path I met a black man. His costume consisted chiefly of a straw hat with a broad brim. I said to him, "You speak English?" and he said, "Ugh; leetle." "Well,

where can I buy a hat?" He pointed north along the path, then swept his hand to the east, put his fingers across each other, then stuck three fingers up. This was English. I presumed it meant, to go on until I found a path crossing this one, then take it to the eastward about three miles.

I made signs to know if he would trade hats, and he seemed pleased with the idea. We traded, and I patted him on the back and said, "Good boy."

I walked on with a hat about four sizes too small stuck on the back of my head, and he went south with something resting on his shoulders.

Stepping aside amongst the small trees, I opened my clothes and unloosening my belt, took out eight or ten sovereigns and put them into my pocket. Then, after taking a drink out of my jug, I threw it and my stale food away.

I returned to the path, quickened my step and soon came upon the cross path. In about an hour I reached a miserable-looking country store kept by a native or half-breed, who could speak a little English.

I bought a straw hat and something that he called shoes. I also got this native merchant to give me a dinner. It was not much of a dinner; but oh, it was sweet to get a taste of wheat bread again.

I asked him a great many questions, and learned that it was about twenty miles to a town of some size. I got him to lend me a horse to take me to the hotel in that town. He sent a native lad for the animal, and that night I landed in a hotel kept by an Englishman, where there were some signs of civilization.

I very soon bought a suit of clothes, got my hair cut and my beard trimmed, took a bath and then wondered if it was myself or some other person. The landlord plied me with questions, but got nothing out of me except that I had been working on a barbarous plantation.

All this time I did not know what country I was in and was afraid to ask. I struck a plan at last to find out. I asked the landlord if he could show me a map, as I wanted to look up some places. He procured one for me, and I found that I was on the Fiji Islands. I had passed the Friendly Islands to the south. Never mind; I was where I could get shipping.

Next day I was on the road in a vehicle, and later on I was settled in a hotel at Levuka.

I found I could not get a direct vessel to San Francisco, but could get one in a week to Samoa, and from there to America. I polished myself up a little and was ready to leave on the day appointed.

I had fully decided that it would be better for me not to say anything about my companions on the island. It cut me to the heart to reach this decision, but it meant so much to me. There was not only the thought of my own people learning of my crime, but there was the possibility of my being arrested and punished for it.

Herbert, and perhaps the two ladies, would be very hard on me, and try to procure my punishment. I could not bear the thought of being arrested and tried. If they were ever rescued, they would think

that I was lost at sea, and I could live on in oblivion until, by the natural course of events, my miserable life should end.

The next Oceanic steamer that entered the Golden Gate had registered on its list of steerage passengers, "John Smith, Samoa to San Francisco."

Before the ship had passed around to its pier, I saw that near the Company's wharf was an unfashionable part of the city, and soon John Smith was a lodger on Second Street, taking his meals out at restaurants.

For many days I searched that city for employment, but failed to get anything to do. I found hundreds of men in like circumstances, and became discouraged.

I took a ticket for Virginia City, intending to try my old trade—mining. Here I found everything run by machinery, and my experience was useless to me. I got a few days' work helping to bring in wood while a man who was sick recovered, and then, again discouraged, I determined to try Salt Lake City. Here the Mormons pushed the Gentiles so that, except in cases where a man was possessed of capital or a calling, there was little chance for him.

My next ticket read "Kansas City." Here I got a situation at drawing wood with a team of mules. The first day I upset the wagon by turning too short, and left the city on the run to escape the blasphemy of the owner of the mules.

My experience at procuring work of any kind during all these years was generally most embarrassing. Sometimes I would get into work that suited me and

continue at it for some time, and the impulse of fear would take such hold of me that I was forced to quit.

When in new scenes with strange faces I felt less the presence of the "ghastly face"; but when I became accustomed to staying in the same room, that face would grow so vivid on some part of the wall that I could not endure it and must seek a change.

Then I would get work where I could board at a boarding-house and change my room every week or two according to my feelings of fear. I once managed to continue in one place for three months, and left much against the wish of my employer.

To describe it more minutely: I always was an air-castle builder, and I could always see pictures in the clouds, in the fire, on the walls, in the candle, and wherever I would look. I have spent many an hour studying the changing pictures in the fleecy clouds that sometimes hang lazily in the sky. In those days these pictures were fantastic, changing and amusing, but now there was but one picture everywhere. The pattern of a wall paper, a few cracks or spots in the corner of a room, the smoke on the chimney of a lamp, the flickering light from a fire, anywhere and everywhere the same. If I looked to the clouds it was there. If I turned my eyes to the moon I saw it there. If I looked up to the trees it was among the branches. If I closed my eyes it was there more vividly than anywhere else. That awful "ghastly face," as I saw it in horror that dreadful night in the sickly half-moonlight, on that lonely island!

I used my reason to argue it away. I did not

believe, and would not believe, and do not believe in ghostly apparitions. I knew it came from a disordered mind, and was the result of the ever-present thought that I was a manslayer; but reason could not put it down, and it lived as it lived on that night when I saw it first.

Was I insane? Yes, I know I was insane; for all men are insane on some point. Others do not know in what particular their insanity effects them. Unfortunately I did know the point of my weakness.

Oh, would to God I did not know!

In the warmer seasons of the year I turned northward, and in the colder southward, and moving to and fro, I covered much of the country; but all places proved alike to me. There was no rest. The world did not hold a peaceful spot for me above its sod. Would I find peace when its sods covered my head?

Thus wandering, at last I found work for a few weeks in Buffalo. I had been in the habit, ever since I landed in America, of searching all the newspapers that came within my reach, to ascertain if they contained any word of a rescue of the castaways. In one of the papers that my employer brought to his house I saw this notice:

“Lord Kilraine and party, of England, are stopping for a few days at the Prospect House, Niagara Falls, Ont.”

The paper fell from my hands. I turned as pale as death. I felt that awful creeping sensation through my veins.

I went straight to my employer and told him I must

leave him at once. He said, "You are an odd-acting man, anyway. What ails you?"

"Oh," said I, "I am not quite right and I cannot help it, but really I must go."

He put his hand into his pocket and gave me the few dollars that were coming to me, and the next train carried "John Smith" to Niagara Falls.

Going to the "Prospect House," I walked up and down for more than two hours. The rushing cataract, only a few rods away, had no attraction for me. A carriage drove up to the steps of the hotel and a lady and three gentlemen alighted.

I could not be mistaken. So like his father. Was that the boy I had taught to ride his pony?

Oh, what would I not give to be able to walk up to him and tell him who I was! But no, that could never be. My hands were stained with blood, and I knew he must be pure and good.

I turned and walked away to hide my emotion. Returning, I went into the hotel and walked up to the writing desk. I took down a sheet of paper and wrote a note to his Lordship, asking if my father and mother were alive, and if all their children were alive and doing well. I signed the note, "An old servant of the family."

I went to a bell-boy and gave him fifty cents to deliver the note, and awaited his return on the porch.

Presently he returned and handed me the reply. I thanked him and walked away.

I sought a secluded spot, and sitting under a tree where I thought I was safe from interruption, I

opened the note and read that my mother had been dead about thirteen years and my father about eight years. The rest of the family in England were alive and doing well. A postscript said, "The absent one has not yet returned."

"My mother died about thirteen years ago," I murmured brokenly, "and her loving spirit did not rest until it found her wanderer." Found him, oh, how wretched in that distant sea! I felt sure that she had visited me that night as I lay under the bush, bruised in body and spirit.

I lay down on the grass and looked up to heaven through the branches of that tree. The tears overflowed and ran down my face. A form gathered before my eyes. Oh, blessed form—the form of my angel mother. That same sweet smile was on her face, and she seemed to bring peace and rest to my soul. Through all those years a hideous vision had been ever before me; but here my angel mother blots out that horrid vision and smiles on her forlorn child.

I lifted my hands imploringly and prayed: "Oh, my dear sainted mother; stay ever with your poor, wretched, heartbroken son. Let him feel that he is not cast off from the love and remembrance that were his birthright. Stay with him and cheer his rugged pathway until he lays down life's heavy burden."

Steps and laughing voices aroused me from my reverie. How rudely they had broken into the one happy moment of many years of misery, they did not know.

I looked again; but the vision had fled—perhaps

never to return. And yet I feel that when my poor frame succumbs—which cannot now be long—that vision will come to me, and that angel love will take me by the hand—no longer stained with blood—and lead me up to the glorious throne and explain to the eternal judge that murder was not in my heart when I struck that fatal blow.

CHAPTER XXX.

*Saving for home — I sail for England — The old home —
A familiar face — The old inn — My father's house —
My reflections — The gardener's story.*

I **CROSSED** the Niagara River, and looked about for something to do. I succeeded in getting work in a paper pulp mill. I found that my visit to Lord Kilrairie and the information he had given me about my family had aroused in me a longing desire to see my dear old home. As the desire did not abate with time, I began to think seriously of going to England.

I never spent a dollar that I could save, for I had a horror of ever becoming a subject to charity, and my savings would have amounted to something quite handsome, were it not for my frequent changes, which cost me considerable in traveling expenses and living while out of employment. Still I had several hundred dollars and felt that I could afford to take a cheap passage ticket and return, without leaving me altogether without funds in the event of my taking sick.

When I left England I was an almost beardless young man; now I was gray and with a heavy beard.

My rough life and trouble had added ten years to my age, and my appearance was such that I felt convinced the most intimate friend of my youth would not recognize me. I would wear clothing suited to the calling of a laborer, and put up at some obscure inn. I would visit the old scenes, look into the faces of my brothers and sisters, pour out my tears at my mother's tomb, suffer the terrible agony that recollections would bring to my heart, and then again bid all farewell.

Having thought it all out and the desire growing more intense every day, I decided to start. Getting my pay on a Saturday I procured a ticket for New York, and on arriving there, put up at a cheap hotel until the day of the sailing of the first steamer for Liverpool.

It would be impossible to describe my feelings as I sat on the deck of that steamer and watched the receding shores of America, and realized that every throb of the great engine sent me nearer to that spot so dear to me and yet so dreaded. I began to regret having started on the journey. What if by any means I should be recognized? I could not endure the thought. The sea was calm, yet I began to feel sick, and soon retired to my berth, where I remained during most of the voyage. At length the day came when all on board were anxiously anticipating the cry — "Land ho!" All except myself seemed in joyful anticipation. Merry laughter filled the air, and glad faces were everywhere to be seen. I felt in a peculiar mood. I wanted to see the old familiar spots and faces, to

place my foot in the old paths, and handle the endeared objects of my boyhood days; yet the fear possessed me that I would not be able to bear the ordeal. I was like a charmed bird, I could not free myself from the enchantment, even though it should bring me death.

We were towed to our moorings. Many of the passengers had friends who came on board, and there was happiness on every hand; but no kind smile of recognition greeted me. I landed with the other steerage passengers, carrying all my earthly stores in a small, well-worn hand-bag, and was soon moving toward the home of my youth, in a third-class carriage, in a parliamentary train.

I wondered where I should find hotel accommodation suited to my means and pretensions. Well as I knew almost every foot of the old town, my acquaintance with the public houses was exceedingly limited, and as I rode along I was busy in thought trying to decide what to do. At length I remembered of an incident that helped me to a decision. A young friend of mine, when I was quite a boy, had been thrown from his horse in the suburbs of the town, and badly hurt. He had been carried into an inn, near to the place where the accident occurred, and had lain there a few weeks before he recovered sufficiently to be removed. I had visited him some two or three times while he was there, and I remembered that it was a very quiet, cozy place. I would go there, and if it was still kept as a hostelry, I would make it my temporary home.

When the train reached the station at which I was to alight, the sun was near its setting. The day had been fine, and the evening was beautiful and glorious; but I had no thought for nature's beauties. I felt like a criminal condemned to pass through a line of detectives; I was certain that every one who looked at me was about to cry out — "The prodigal has returned at last." I had not, as yet, recognized any one; but felt that my trial would come when I stepped upon the station platform. Taking up my hand-bag, I walked as smartly as possible out of the station grounds. This station had been built since I had left England, and when fairly outside I stopped to take my bearings. This did not take long. There before and below me lay the dear old town. Yonder among the trees I could see the gables of my old home. Before I was aware of it, my eyes overflowed with tears, and I was sobbing audibly. Some one stopped near me and looked into my face, attracted by my sorrow. Then a sweet voice that sounded like that of an angel said, "Poor man, are you in trouble, can I help you?" I turned round quickly, and looking into her face, I almost shrieked. That voice! That face! I did not stop an instant, but ran down the street until, turning a corner, I was out of her sight. Then I walked hurriedly in the direction of the little hostelry. I found much difficulty in locating it. The hand of change had been at work, but the names of the streets helped me, and at length I was able to find it.

Flushed and excited, my voice husky with sup-

pressed tears, I presented myself at the bar and asked for a week's board, at the same time tendering the money in payment. The dapper little man behind the bar, who was engaged in a lively discussion with two others in front of that obstacle, about labor and strikes, turned and looked at me for some seconds before he replied. His close observation drew the eyes of his friends to me, and I fairly winced under their united gaze. The landlord, who did not seem fully satisfied with my appearance, said, "Well, friend, what part of the country do ye 'ail from?"

I replied that I had come from America and should soon return there again.

He said he hoped there was nothing to hinder me from returning, and that I would pardon his inquiring; but it was necessary to be somewhat cautious about taking in strangers.

I told him I presumed there were plenty of inns in the town where I could stay, but I had come to him first, because I had once stopped with him when I was a boy.

"Oh, that would be in my dear old father's day," said he.

I said, "Very likely, as it was many years ago."

"Well, friend," said he, "we will give ye a room and make ye as comfortable as we can."

I was shown up to the same room in which my young friend lay when he was hurt. I was glad of this, for it seemed to have a pleasant association with it. I sat down in a chair and began to think. That voice still rang in my ear; that face haunted me. So

like my mother's; could it have been her spirit? Then it all came clear to my mind. It was my youngest sister grown now to womanhood. She was always like her mother, both in looks and disposition. Then I began to reckon the years. Yes, just about the age that my mother was when I left home. Should I make myself known to her she would almost take my mother's place in my heart. That same kind heart, full of sympathy for any one in distress, could not pass the rough tramp that I appeared to be, and see his tears, without trying to soothe his sorrows just as her mother would have done.

Supper was called and I went down and ate, or rather tried to eat, for there was a great lump in my throat, and I felt so strangely excited that I could scarcely sit still. After supper I went out into the street. I felt that I had made a mistake in locating in this house; for I heard the landlord's step following me to the door, and as I walked down the street I was sure he was standing watching me. I knew that he was suspicious and would not rest satisfied until he found out all about me.

It was now quite dark, and I walked straight toward my old home. Reaching it, I paced back and forth in front of it several times. Lights were in all the windows, forms were moving about on the lawn, and the hum of voices and laughter would sometimes reach my ears. A carriage drove up to the entrance and its inmates were welcomed. Everything was just as I had left it so many years before. Why should I not walk across the lawn and stand in the porch and make one

of the happy group? No, that could never be. I took it for granted that my eldest brother had taken his father's place, and lived in the old house and doubtless continued his father's business in the town. Sadly I retraced my steps. I passed through familiar streets where change had not obliterated the old landmarks. I stood in front of the old business stand, and saw my brother's name in gilt letters where my father's used to be. I could scarcely realize that so many years had passed since I last saw the grand old buildings. I turned and walked slowly back to the hotel, and retired at once to my room, but not to sleep. My nerves were so excited that I could not rest, and I lay longing for the morning that seemed never to come.

At dawn of day I arose, dressed myself, and opening the blind, sat waiting for the stir of day to begin before I sallied forth. Yonder in the distance I could see the wooded hills, where I had often wandered with my gun. Just to the left the tops of the trees in Lord Kilraine's park could be seen, and I sat with my eyes fixed on these, but with my thoughts on subjects quite foreign. I began to think of some plan by which I could make myself known and not bring my trouble to my friends. One way only presented itself, and that I could not entertain. It meant deception. I need not tell them. I could live on, and if the castaways were never rescued none would ever know my secret; but should some vessel discover them—a thing that might happen any day—and they were to land in England, I would at once be known as a murderer, my family would be covered with shame, and I would have added

to me the reproach of having deceived them. No, if ever I went to them I must tell them the whole story, and either be received or rejected by them. I lacked the courage to do this and determined not to make myself known. This being settled, I next began to think of some plan by which I could obtain the full particulars of the history of our family since I left them, but failed to reach any definite conclusion. Just before I left home our head gardener had been changed, and I never had an opportunity of making the acquaintance of the new man, but I determined to make my way to the gardener's house, and try what my wits would do for me. The gardener's house faced a narrow lane that divided my father's property from that of his neighbor, the manufacturer of whom I have before spoken.

After breakfast I made my way to this lane and walked past the gardener's house. To my delight I saw a white-haired old man seated in the shade of the little porch. I entered into conversation with him, and soon ascertained that he had been hired just before my departure, and that his son had succeeded him. The old man, too feeble longer to work, was being kept by the dutiful son. Having learned this much my plan was soon laid. I told the old man that I had worked for the family before he came there, and that I had left England and gone to the Colonies, where I had remained ever since; that I had lately returned to see my friends, and being attached to the family, I would very much like to hear all about them. Old people generally like to find good listeners while they talk of

their past life, and the old gardener was no exception. An interrogation here and there led him in the direction I wished him to take, and he gave me more information than I had hoped to obtain. Fortunately his eyesight was too dim for him to discover the tears that flowed freely from my eyes, and the sighs he no doubt attributed to my sympathy with my old employer and his "dear family."

My eldest brother lived in the old house and conducted the old business. My other brothers were married and settled in different places, all near by. My sisters were also married, and the one who had addressed me lived only a short distance from where I had met her. My father and mother had died as Lord Kilraine had informed me.

I said, "But there was still another son. He was in college when I left; where is he now?"

"Oh," said the old gardener, "he disappeared shortly after I came here, and I can tell you it gave them trouble enough. It seems he was a very jolly young man, though I never made his acquaintance; he was a great favorite with his mother and most of the neighbors hereabouts. He didn't do well at his studies, and they do say the master was rather hard on him, and he being of a proud spirit, left and went abroad without saying as much as by your leave. Of course the master repented when it was too late and tried to find him. He heard of him hunting buffaloes amongst the wild Indians of America, then he was in the jungles of India, then a gold miner in Australia, then a coffee planter in South America; but when the

agent sent out to find him would get to any one of these places, he was just gone from there. The mistress took it greatly to heart. They do say she never was the same after he left. She never was very strong, they say, and after he left she was seldom seen outside of the house, except when attending the chapel over there. At last she pined away and died. The master, too, felt very bad over it, and, of course, left a handsome provision in his will for the lad if he should ever turn up; but I think he is likely gone to another world long before this; indeed, they mostly all think so."

CHAPTER XXXI.

My mother's grave— Watched by spies— My arrest and imprisonment— A bold move— Interview with my eldest brother— Our mutual grief and joy— He endeavors to change my determination— I remain firm— The transfer of my heritage— Good-by to England— At home in the New World— My only wish.

IT was noon when I bade the old gardener good-by, thanking him heartily for his kind information. I returned to the hotel and took dinner, after which, I set out for the cemetery. Having gained admittance I strolled about for a little while, reading on stones and monuments the names of those I had known in life. How many had passed away since last I saw this place! Somehow I felt that I was being watched, and dared not go direct to my mother's tomb, lest I should excite suspicion of who I was. At length I reached the family vault. Casting a look around me and seeing no person near, I gave myself up to my grief; falling prostrate, I prayed to God for forgiveness for breaking a loving mother's heart. How long I lay there I do not know. Suddenly I became aware of the fact that some one was near me. Lifting my head, I saw a man standing only a few feet away and

looking intently at me. Addressing me, he said —
“You seem to be in grief.”

I replied that I had a mother buried in that cemetery while I was abroad, and I could not find her grave. He suggested that I had better inquire of the sexton, and walked slowly on. I watched him for some time and saw him turn and occasionally take a sly glance at me over his shoulder. I felt sure that my suspicious little landlord had set a watch upon me.

When I left the cemetery I went to my brother's store, where I managed to obtain a glimpse of my brother. He looked greatly like my father. I then started for my eldest sister's, in the hope of seeing her face, but while standing near her gate I was ordered to move on by a policeman in uniform. Retracing my steps and walking smartly, I nearly ran against the man who had addressed me in the cemetery. I now felt for a certainty that I was looked upon with suspicion, and was being watched so closely that I could not hope to carry my investigations further without detection, and so returned to the hotel. When I passed the different policemen they all turned and looked after me. When I reached the hotel I found two men in conversation with the landlord, and the look that I detected passing between them convinced me that I was the subject of their conversation.

The landlord began to ply me with questions. My pride came to my rescue, and drawing myself up, I gave him most unmistakably to understand that it was none of his business. As I had ascertained that he had set spies upon me, I would thank him to return

the money I had paid him for my board, as I would not stay in his place a moment longer.

One of the men told me not to get in a passion too soon, that he was the chief constable, and that he had telegraphed to Scotland Yard for instructions concerning me, as it was believed that I was a member of a notorious gang now doing the country. In the mean time he would accommodate me at a cheaper house than the one I had chosen. He soon snapped the handcuffs over my wrists, and I was marched off between the two to the police station.

Here was a pretty fix to be in. No telling what would be proved against me. Public sentiment would be on the side of the crown, and as I had no friends in the world, my only hope lay in the officers of the steamship identifying me. It would be difficult to get them to attend court, as they would be at sea most of the time, and my limited supply of funds would be exhausted long before the end was reached. What would I do?

The exigencies of the case demanded a bold stroke, and I decided to make it, let the consequences be what they might. I would send for my eldest brother, pledge him to secrecy, and tell him all my story. Acting upon the impulse, I knocked at the door of my cell, and presently a guard came and inquired what I wanted? I told him, requesting him to say that the person sending had something of great importance to say to him. Half an hour later the door was opened, and the guard entered accompanied by my brother. I asked the guard to step out of hearing for a few

moments. He said it was against the rules, but finally, at the instigation of my brother, he retired and left us alone. I took hold of my brother's hand and said, "Promise me, for your dead mother's sake, that you will never tell what I am about to reveal to you."

"What do you know of her?"

"Never mind now, you shall know later; only promise me what I ask."

"I do promise," said he.

The tears flowed from my eyes; I could scarcely articulate a word. Holding his hand in both of mine, I said, "I am your brother. Get me out of this place and I will tell you all; but don't let any of the others know."

"I cannot believe it," he replied.

"I do not wonder at that, but I have a strange story to tell, which, when you have heard you will believe. I am no criminal; don't fear that I will injure you or yours; only get me out of this."

He turned to leave, gave my hand a strong pressure and said, "I will return soon."

It was nearly half an hour when the door opened, and the guard coming in, told me to follow him. I did so and was soon breathing the fresh air again. A man asked me to accompany him, and I was soon in an inner room in my brother's counting house.

My brother was awaiting my coming and bade me be seated. He dismissed the man, and turning to me, said, "You will now have an opportunity of proving that you are my long-lost brother. I will listen to your story."

"Before I tell you my story I want your solemn pledge that you will never reveal to any other member of the family that you have seen me or know of my whereabouts. But for this unfortunate arrest you would not have known, and when I tell you the story of my life, I hope you will appreciate my motive in asking a pledge."

He gave the pledge, to be broken only in case I consented to have it so.

I soon told him incidents in our early life that fully convinced him of my identity. He wept like a child, and I was as deeply moved. When our agitation had somewhat abated, I rehearsed to him the whole of my eventful life since leaving home, and my reason for not wishing to be known to the family.

He appreciated what he called my self-sacrifice, but would greatly prefer that the family should be told the story, and be allowed to help me bear my burden by administering comfort to me. He said he could speak for all of them, that they would be only too glad of the opportunity of standing by me in case of my ever getting into difficulty through the "accident," as he kindly called it, by which I killed the Commodore. He argued that it was done solely in self-defense, and that any jury would honorably acquit me. There was no premeditation on my part, and had the Commodore been a day longer in attempting to carry into effect his murderous intentions, I would have been away from the island, with nothing to look back upon except the self-consciousness that I had done everything I could for the benefit and comfort of the other casta-



LOCATION OF THE ISLAND.

ways. He entreated me to allow myself to be made known to the family, and to at least remain in England if I could not remain at home.

I told him it was no use; that "ghastly face" was so photographed on my brain that its perpetual reproduction before my eyes made me feel so strange that I would only give anxiety and pain to all of them, and my desire to change continually would not permit me to enjoy their society. I told him that the scenes of a new country were better suited to me than the less changing life of the old land, and that I would return by the first steamer to the western world, and would there take up my burden and bear it as well as I could until the Master should say, "It is enough."

I offered, if it were possible, to make over the whole of the allowance that had been left to me, to the other members of the family. He thought it might be done if I would stay with him for a day. His attorney could be brought and I could arrange it all.

It was toward midnight when his carriage was brought, and we entered it and were driven "Home." I was shown by my brother into my own room, which I found had been kept ready for me by my mother as long as she lived, and had only been occupied on very rare occasions since her death. I did not sleep during the remainder of the night; my heart was too full of sorrow, and my head of recollections.

All the next day I remained in my room, and a servant brought my meals. I do not know with what kind of story my brother quieted the curiosity of his family, but none of them came near me.

At night my brother came to my room, accompanied by his solicitor. All the papers were prepared and ready for my signature, and in a few minutes my father's legacy to me was divided equally amongst my brothers and sisters.

A train left the station a little before midnight in the direction of Liverpool. I requested to be allowed to go by that train and catch a steamer that would sail the following day. My brother's carriage was brought out, and he and I entered it and were driven near to the station. We alighted and he walked some distance with me; then stopping, he took my hand in his, and said, "Now, my dear, unhappy brother, I feel that but for the pledge that you extorted from me, I would not let you go. I want you to remember always that when you care to return, my house is your home. Come back to us, live with us, die with us, and rest beside our dear mother's dust. Write to me. Tell me always where you are, that I may go to you if you are in distress. I will pray for you every day. I will think of you every hour. Don't forget us, and may the God of mercy remove from you that horrid, disturbing vision."

Slipping a package into my hand he said, "Take this from me and don't be afraid to use it freely. Don't labor for a living; you surely need rest. God grant you peace. Good-by."

He fell on my neck and we embraced each other affectionately and then parted, neither of us able to say more than an almost inaudible "Good-by."

I took the train to Liverpool and was soon in the intermediate of a steamer destined for Quebec. I did

not open my brother's package until I was well out to sea. I found it contained several hundred-pound notes, and a letter of credit for an unlimited amount.

Having no longer any anxiety as to the matters of this life I determined to take things easier, and for some time I moved about from one spot of interest to another as fancy led me; but I found that while unemployed I had more time to brood over the past; so I started to work again, and settling in a Canadian city, took up the old routine.

My life is as it was, neither better nor worse. The same unhappy path lies before me that I have left behind. My step grows feebler, my burden is wearing out my vital forces, the bottom of the hill will soon be reached. I would like to live longer for one reason only. It would make me glad to know the telling of my story had led to the rescue of the castaways. This done, I could gladly say: "Farewell."

NOTE. — This story is absolute fact. The island lies in about S. latitude 30° , W. longitude 160° . Any person interested in discovering the present condition of the island or the possible survivors of the company of castaways may communicate with Mr. J. A. Wilkinson, 52 Cameron Street, Toronto, Ontario, to whom this story was told and who has acted as editor to the old man's narrative.

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